

Jeremiah

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merged

<https://www.sefaria.org/Jeremiah>

This file contains merged sections from the following text versions:

-THE JPS TANAKH: Gender-Sensitive Edition

-<https://jps.org/books/the-jps-tanakh-gender-sensitive-edition/>

Jeremiah

Chapter 1

The words of Jeremiah son of Hilkiah, one of the priests at Anathoth in the territory of Benjamin.

The word of GOD came to him in the days of King Josiah son of Amon of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign, and throughout the days of King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah, and until the end of the eleventh year of King Zedekiah son of Josiah of Judah, when Jerusalem went into exile in the fifth month.

The word of GOD came to me:

Before I created you in the womb, I selected you;
Before you were born, I consecrated you;
I appointed you a prophet concerning the nations.

I replied:
Ah, my Sovereign GOD!
I don't know how to speak,
For I am still a boy.

And GOD said to me:
Do not say, "I am still a boy,"
But go wherever I send you
And speak whatever I command you.

Have no fear of them,
For I am with you to deliver you
—declares GOD.
GOD

reached out and touched my mouth, and GOD said to me: Herewith I put My words into your mouth.

See, I appoint you this day
Over nations and kingdoms:
To uproot and to pull down,
To destroy and to overthrow,
To build and to plant.

The word of GOD came to me: What do you see, Jeremiah? I replied: I see a branch of an almond tree.^a
almond tree Heb.

shoqed.

GOD

said to me:
You have seen

right,
For I am watchful
^b
watchful Heb. *shoqed*. to bring My word to pass.

And the word of GOD came to me a second time: What do you see? I replied:
I see a steaming

pot,

Tipped away from the north.

^c
Tipped away from the north Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

And G^{OD} said to me:
 From the north shall disaster break loose
 Upon all the inhabitants of the land!

For I am summoning all the peoples
 Of the kingdoms of the north
 —declares G^{OD}.
 They shall come, and shall each set up a throne
 Before the gates of Jerusalem,
 Against its walls round about,
 And against all the towns of Judah.

And I will argue My case against them^d
them I.e., Jerusalem and Judah.
 For all their wickedness:
 They have forsaken Me
 And sacrificed to other gods
 And worshiped the works of their hands.

So you, gird up your loins,
 Arise and speak to them
 All that I command you.
 Do not break down before them,
 Lest I break you before them.

I make you this day
 A fortified city,
 And an iron pillar,
 And bronze walls
 Against the whole land—
 Against Judah's kings and officers,
 And against its priests and citizens.^e
citizens Lit. "the people of the land."

They will attack you,
 But they shall not overcome you;
 For I am with you—declares G^{OD}—to save you.

Chapter 2

The word of G^{OD} came to me, saying,
 Go proclaim to Jerusalem: Thus said G^{OD}:
 I accounted to your favor
 The devotion of your youth,
 Your love as a bride—
 How you followed Me in the wilderness,
 In a land not sown

Israel was holy to G^{OD},
 The first fruits of God's harvest.
 All who ate of it were held guilty;
 Disaster befell them
 —declares G^{OD}.

Hear the word of
G<small>OD</small>, O House of Jacob,
Every clan of the House of Israel!
Thus said
G<small>OD</small>:
What wrong did your
ancestors find in Me
That they
abandoned Me
And went after
delusion and were deluded?
They never asked themselves, "Where is
 G<small>OD</small>,
Who brought
us up from the land of Egypt,
Who led us through the wilderness,
<span
class="poetry indentAll">A land of deserts and pits,
<span
class="poetry indentAll">A land of drought and darkness,
<span
class="poetry indentAll">A land nobody had traversed,
<span
class="poetry indentAll">Where no human being had dwelt?"
I brought you to this country of
farmland
To enjoy its fruit and
its bounty;
But you came and
defiled My land,
You made My
possession abhorrent.
The priests never asked themselves, "Where
is G<small>OD</small>?"
The
guardians of the Teaching ignored Me;
The
rulers^a<i

rebelled against Me,
And the prophets
prophesied by Baal
And followed
what can do no good.
Oh, I will go on accusing
you
—declares
G<small>OD</small>—
And I will accuse
your children's children!
Just cross over to the isles of the Kittim
and look,
Send to Kedar and
observe carefully;
See if aught
like this has ever happened:
Has any nation changed its
gods
Even though they are no-
gods?
But My people has
exchanged its glory
For what can
do no good.
Be appalled, O heavens, at
this;
Be horrified, utterly
dazed!
—says
G<small>OD</small>.
For My people have done a twofold
wrong:
They have forsaken Me,
the Fount of living waters,
And
hewed out for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns,
<span
class="poetry indentAll">That cannot even hold water.
Is Israel a bondman?
<span
class="poetry indentAll">Is he a home-born slave?
<span
class="poetry indentAll">Then why is he given over to plunder?
Lions have roared over
him,
Have raised their
cries.
They have made his land a
waste,
His cities desolate,
without inhabitants.

Those, too, in Noph and Tahpanhes^b*Noph and Tahpanhes Cities in Egypt. The Egyptians, like the Assyrians, will prove a disappointment; cf. v. 36.</i>*
Will lay bare^c*Will lay bare Meaning of Heb. uncertain.</i>* your head.
See, that is the price you have paid
For forsaking the ETERNAL your God^d*that is the price you have paid / For forsaking the ETERNAL your God Lit. "that is what your forsaking the ETERNAL your God is doing to you."</i>*
Who led you in the way.^e*Who led you in the way Meaning of Heb. uncertain.</i>*
What, then, is the good of your going to Egypt
To drink the waters of the Nile?
And what is the good of your going to Assyria
To drink the waters of the Euphrates?
Let your misfortune reprove you,
Let your afflictions rebuke you;
Mark well how bad and bitter it is
That you forsake the ETERNAL your God,
That awe for Me is not in you
—declares my Sovereign GOD of Hosts.
For long ago you^f*you For the form, cf. *shaqqamti*, Judg. 5.7; in contrast to others "I."</i>* broke your yoke,
Tore off your yoke-bands,
And said, "I will not work!"^g*work Following the *kethib*; *qere* "transgress."</i>*
On every high hill and under every verdant tree,
You recline as a whore.
I planted you with noble vines,
All with choicest seed;
Alas, I find you changed
Into a base, an alien vine!
Though you wash with natron
And use much lye,
Your guilt is ingrained before Me
—declares my Sovereign GOD.
How can you say, "I am not defiled,
I have not gone after the Baalim?"
Look at your deeds in the Valley,^h*Valley Of Hinnom; cf. 7.31–32; 32.35.</i>*
Consider what you have done!
Like a lustful she-camel,
Restlessly running about,ⁱ*Restlessly running about Meaning of Heb. uncertain.</i>*

Or like a wild ass used to the
desert,
Snuffing the wind in her
eagerness,
Whose passion none
can restrain,
None that seek her
need grow weary—
In her season,
they'll find her!

Save your foot from going
bare,
And your throat from
thirst.
But you say, "It is no
use.
No, I love the
strangers,^j<i class="footnote">strangers I.e., other gods.</i>
<span
class="poetry indentAll">And after them I must go."

Like a thief chagrined when
caught,
So is the House of
Israel chagrined—
They, their
kings, their officers,
And their
priests and prophets.

They said to wood, "You are my
father,"
To stone, "You gave
birth to me,"
While to Me they
turned their backs
And not their
faces.
But in their hour of
calamity they cry,
"Arise and
save us!"

And where are those gods
<span
class="poetry indentAll">You made for yourself?
<span
class="poetry indentAll">Let them arise and save you, if they
can,
In your hour of
calamity.
For your gods have
become, O Judah,
As many as your
towns!

Why do you call Me to
account?
You have all rebelled
against Me
—declares
 G<small>OD</small>.

To no purpose did I smite your
children;
They would not accept
correction.
Your sword has
devoured your prophets
Like a
ravening lion.

O generation, behold<sup
class="footnote-marker">k</sup><i class="footnote">O generation,
behold Meaning of Heb. uncertain.</i> the word of
G<small>OD</small>!
Have I been like a
desert to Israel,
Or like a land
of deep gloom?
Then why do My
people say, "We have broken loose,
<span class="poetry
indentAll">We will not come to You anymore?"

Can a maiden forget her
jewels,
A bride her
adornments?
Yet My people have
forgotten Me—
Days without
number.

How skillfully you plan your
way
To seek out
love!
Why, you have even
taught
The worst of women your
ways.

>Moreover, on your garments is found
>The lifeblood of the innocent poor—
>You did not catch them breaking in.^l
breaking in In which case there might have been an excuse for killing them; cf. Exod. 22.1.
>Yet, despite all these things,^m
Yet, despite all these things Meaning of Heb. uncertain.
>You say, “I have been acquitted;
>Surely, God’s anger has turned away from me.”
>Lo, I will bring you to judgment
>For saying, “I have not sinned.”
>How you cheapen yourself,
>By changing your course!
>You shall be put to shame through Egypt,
>Just as you were put to shame through Assyria.
>From this way, too, you will come out
>With your hands on your head;ⁿ
With your hands on your head A gesture of wild grief; cf. 2 Sam. 13.19.
>For
>GOD has rejected those you trust,
>You will not prosper with them.

Chapter 3

[The word of GOD came to me] as follows: If a man divorces his wife, and she leaves him and gets married to another man, can he ever go back to her? Would not such a land be defiled?^a
Cf. Deut. 24.1-4. Now you have whored with many lovers: can you return to Me?—says GOD.
>Look up to the bare heights, and see:
>Where have they not lain with you?
>You waited for them on the roadside
>Like a bandit^b
bandit Lit. “Arab.” in the wilderness.
>And you defiled the land
>With your whoring and your debauchery.
>And when showers were withheld
>And the late rains did not come,
>You had the brazenness^c
brazenness Lit. “forehead.” of a streetwalker,
>You refused to be ashamed.
>Just now you called to Me, “Father!”^d
Father I.e., the One who conveys legitimacy and provides support, in return for loyalty.
>You are the Companion of my youth.
>Does one hate for all time?
>Does one rage^e
hate...rage Cf. Akkadian parallels *nadāru* and *shamāru*.
>That is how you

spoke;

You did wrong, and had your way.

^f
class="footnote">had your way Meaning of Heb. uncertain.</i>

GOD

said to me in the days of King Josiah: Have you seen what Rebel Israel did, going to every high mountain and under every leafy tree, and whoring there?

I thought: After she has done all these things, she will come back to Me. But she did not come back; and her sister, Faithless Judah, saw it.

I noted: Because Rebel Israel had committed adultery, I cast her off and handed her a bill of divorce; yet her sister, Faithless Judah, was not afraid—she too went and whored.

Indeed, the land was defiled by her casual immorality, as she committed adultery with stone and with wood.^g
class="footnote">with stone and with wood I.e., she deserted her God for idols of stone and wood.</i>

And after all that, her sister, Faithless Judah, did not return to Me wholeheartedly, but insincerely—declares GOD.

And GOD said to me: Rebel Israel has shown herself more in the right than Faithless Judah.

Go, make this proclamation toward the north, and say: Turn back, O Rebel Israel—declares GOD. I will not look on you in anger, for I am compassionate—declares GOD; I do not bear a grudge for all time.

Only recognize your sin; for you have transgressed against the ETERNAL your God, and scattered your favors^h
class="footnote">favors Lit. "ways."</i> among strangers under every leafy tree, and you have not heeded Me—declares GOD.

Turn back, rebellious children—declares GOD. Since I have espousedⁱ

class="footnote">espoused Meaning of Heb. <i>ba'alti</i> uncertain; compare 31.32.</i> you, I will take you, one from a town and two from a clan, and bring you to Zion.

And I will give you shepherds^j
class="footnote">shepherds Meaning of Heb. uncertain.</i> after My own heart, who will pasture you with knowledge and skill.

And when you increase and are fertile in the land, in those days—declares GOD—people shall no longer speak of the Ark of the Covenant of GOD, nor shall it come to mind. They shall not mention it, or miss it, or make another.

At that time, they shall call Jerusalem "GOD's Throne," and all nations shall assemble there, in the name of GOD, at Jerusalem. They^k
class="footnote">They I.e., Israel and Judah.</i> shall no longer follow the willfulness of their evil hearts.

In those days, the House of Judah shall go with the House of Israel; they shall come together from the land of the north to the land I gave your ancestors as a possession.

I had resolved to adopt you as My child, and I gave you a desirable land—the fairest heritage of all the nations; and I thought you would surely call Me "Father,"^l
class="footnote">Father See note at v. 4.</i> and never cease to be loyal to Me.

Instead, you have broken faith with Me, as a woman breaks faith with a paramour, O House of Israel—declares GOD.

Hark! On the bare heights is heard
The suppliant weeping of the people of Israel,
For they

have gone a crooked way,
Ignoring the E<small>TERNAL</small> their God.
 Turn back, O rebellious children,
I will heal your afflictions!
"Here we are, we come to You,
For You, O E<small>TERNAL</small> One, are our God!
 Surely, futility comes from the hills,
Confusion from the mountains.^m<i class="footnote">Surely, futility comes from ... the mountains I.e., the pagan rites celebrated on the hills are futile; exact force of Heb. uncertain.</i>
Only through the E<small>TERNAL</small> our God
Is there deliverance for Israel.
 But the Shameful Thingⁿ<i class="footnote">Shameful Thing Heb. <i>Bosheth</i>, a contemptuous substitute for Baal.</i> has consumed
The possessions of our ancestors ever since our youth—
Their flocks and herds,
Their sons and daughters.
 Let us lie down in our shame,
Let our disgrace cover us;
For we have sinned against the E<small>TERNAL</small> our God,
We and our ancestors from our youth to this day,
And we have not heeded the E<small>TERNAL</small> our God."

Chapter 4

If you return, O Israel
—declares G<small>OD</small>—

If you return to Me,
If you remove your abominations from My presence
And do not waver,
 And swear, "As G<small>OD</small> lives,"^a<i class="footnote">swear, "As G<small>OD</small> lives" I.e., profess the worship of G<small>OD</small>.</i>
In sincerity, justice, and righteousness—
Nations shall bless themselves by you^b<i class="footnote">you Heb. "him."</i>
And praise themselves by you.^c<i class="footnote">you Heb. "him."</i>
 For thus said G<small>OD</small> to the citizenry of Judah and to Jerusalem:
Break up the untilled ground,
And do not sow among thorns.
 Open^d<i class="footnote">Open Lit. "circumcise"; cf. Deut. 10.16; 30.6.</i> your hearts to G<small>OD</small>,
Remove the thickening about your hearts—
O citizenry of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem—
Lest My wrath break forth like fire,
<span class="poetry"

indentAll">And burn, with none to quench it,
Because of your wicked acts.
Proclaim in Judah,
Announce in Jerusalem,
And say:
"Blow the horn in the land!"
Shout aloud and say:
"Assemble, and let us go
Into the fortified cities!"
Set up a signpost: To Zion.
Take refuge, do not delay!
For I bring evil from the north,
And great disaster.
The lion^e<i class="footnote">The lion I.e., the invader from the north, as G<small>OD</small>'s agent of destruction.</i> has come up from its thicket:
The destroyer of nations has set out,
Has departed from its place,
To make your land a desolation;
Your cities shall be ruined,
Without inhabitants.
For this, put on sackcloth,
Mourn and wail;
For G<small>OD</small>'s blazing anger
Has not turned away from us.
And in that day
—declares G<small>OD</small>—
The mind of the king
And the mind of the nobles shall fail,
The priests shall be appalled,
And the prophets shall stand aghast.

And I said:^f<i class="footnote">And I said Septuagint reads "And they shall say."</i> Ah, my Sovereign G<small>OD</small>! Surely You have deceived this people and Jerusalem, saying:
It shall be well with you—
Yet the sword threatens the very life!

At that time, it shall be said concerning this people and Jerusalem:
The conduct of My poor people^g<i class="footnote">My poor people Lit. "the daughter that is My people"; so, frequently, in poetry.</i> is like searing wind
From the bare heights of the desert—
It will not serve to winnow or to fan.
A full blast from them comes against Me:
Now I in turn will bring charges against them.
Lo, the destroyer^h<i class="footnote">destroyer Heb. "it," i.e., the invader of v. 7.</i> ascends like clouds,
Its chariots are like a whirlwind,
Its horses are swifter than eagles.
Woe to us, we are ruined!

Wash your heart clean of wickedness,
O Jerusalem, that you may be rescued.
How long will you harbor within you
Your evil designs?
Hark, one proclaims from Dan
And announces calamity from Mount Ephraim!
Tell the nations: Here theyⁱ**they***I.e., the invading forces of v. 7.*
Announce concerning Jerusalem:
Watchers^j**Watchers***See preceding note.*
They raise their voices against the towns of Judah.
Like guards of fields, they surround her on every side.
For she has rebelled against Me
—declares GOD.
Your conduct and your acts
Have brought this upon you;
This is your bitter punishment;
It pierces your very heart.
Oh, my suffering,^k**suffering***Lit. "entrails."*
How I writhe!
Oh, the walls of my heart!
My heart moans within me,
I cannot be silent;
For I hear^l**I hear***Lit. "you, O my being, hear." Change of vocalization yields "I hear the blare of horns, / My inner being, alarms of war."*
Alarms of war.
Disaster overtakes disaster,
For all the land has been ravaged.
Suddenly my tents have been ravaged,
In a moment, my tent cloths.
How long must I see standards
And hear the blare of horns?
For My people are stupid,
They give Me no heed;
They are foolish children,
They are not intelligent.
They are clever at doing wrong,
But unable to do right.
I look at the earth,
It is unformed and void;
At the skies,
And their light is gone.
I look at the mountains,
They are quaking;
And all the hills are rocking.
I look: no human is left,
And all the birds of the sky have fled.
I look: the farmland is desert,
And all its towns are in

ruin—

Because of

OD

Because of God's blazing anger.

(For thus said

OD):

The whole land shall be desolate,

But I will not make an end of it.)

For this the earth mourns,

And skies are dark above—

Because I have spoken, I have planned,

And I will not relent or turn back from it.

At the shout of horseman and bowman

The whole city flees.

They enter the thickets,

They clamber up the rocks.

The whole city is deserted,

Nobody remains there.

And you, who are doomed to ruin,

What do you accomplish by wearing crimson,

By decking yourself in jewels of gold,

By enlarging your eyes with kohl?

You beautify yourself in vain:

Lovers despise you,

They seek your life!

I hear a voice as of one in travail,

Anguish as of a woman bearing her first child,

The voice of Fair Zion

Panting, stretching out her hands:

"Alas for me! I faint

Before the killers!"

Chapter 5

Roam the streets of Jerusalem,

Search its squares,

Look about and take note:

You will not find anyone engaged;

^a

anyone engaged

Conscientiously, as a covenant partner.

There is no one who acts justly,

Who seeks integrity—

That I should pardon her.

Even when they say, "As

OD lives,"

They are sure to be swearing falsely.

O

E

One, Your eyes look for integrity.

You have struck them, but they sensed no pain;

You have consumed them, but they would accept no discipline.

They made their faces harder than rock,

They refused to turn back.

Then I thought: These are just poor folk;

They act foolishly;

For they do not know

the way of OD,
The rules of their God.
So I will go to the
wealthy
And speak with
them:
Surely they know the way
of OD,
The rules of their God.
But they as
well had broken the yoke,
Had
snapped the bonds.
Therefore,
The lion of the forest strikes them down,
The wolf of the desert ravages
them.
A leopard lies in wait by
their towns;
Whoever leaves them
will be torn in pieces.
For
their transgressions are many,
Their rebellious acts unnumbered.
Why should I forgive you?
Your children have forsaken Me
And sworn by no-gods.
When I fed them their fill,
They committed adultery
And went trooping to the prostitute's
house.
They were well-fed, lusty
^b*well-fed, lusty*
Meaning of Heb. uncertain.
stallions,
Each neighing at another's wife.
Shall I not punish such
deeds?
—says
OD—
Shall I not bring
retribution
On a nation such as
this?
Go up among her vines
^c*vines* Lit.
"rows." and destroy;
Lop off her
trailing branches,
For they are
not of OD.
(But
do not make an end.)
For the House of Israel and the House of
Judah
Have betrayed
Me
—declares
OD.
They have been false to
OD
And said: "It is
not so!
^d*It is not so*
Or "Not He"; cf. Deut. 32.39; Isa.
43.13.
No trouble shall come upon
us,
We shall not see sword or
famine.
The prophets shall prove mere
wind
For the Word is not in
them;
Thus-and-thus shall be
done to them!"
Assuredly, thus said
OD,
The God of
Hosts:
Because they
^e*they* Heb.
"you." said that,
I am putting My
words into your mouth as fire,

indentAll">And this people shall be firewood,
Which it will consume.
 Lo, I am bringing against you, O House of Israel,
A nation from afar
—declares G<small>OD</small>
It is an enduring nation,
It is an ancient nation;
A nation whose language you do not know—
You will not understand what they say.
 Their quivers^f<i class="footnote">Their quivers Emendation yields "Whose mouths."</i> are like a yawning grave—
They are all mighty warriors.
 They will devour your harvest and food,
They will devour your sons and daughters,
They will devour your flocks and herds,
They will devour your vines and fig trees.
They will batter down with the sword
The fortified towns on which you rely.

 But even in those days—declares G<small>OD</small>—I will not make an end of you.
 And when they^g<i class="footnote">they Heb. "you."</i> ask, "Because of what did the E<small>TERNAL</small> our God do all these things?" you shall answer them, "Because you forsook Me and served alien gods on your own land, you will have to serve foreigners in a land not your own."
 Proclaim this to the House of Jacob
And announce it in Judah:
 Hear this, O foolish people,
Devoid of intelligence,
That have eyes but can't see,
That have ears but can't hear!
 Should you not revere Me
—says G<small>OD</small>—
Should you not tremble before Me,
Who set the sand as a boundary to the sea,
As a limit for all time, not to be transgressed?
Though its waves toss, they cannot prevail;
Though they roar, they cannot pass it.
 Yet this people has a wayward and defiant heart;
They have turned aside and gone their way.
 They have not said to themselves,
"Let us revere the E<small>TERNAL</small> our God,
Who gives the rain,
The early and late rain in season,
Who keeps for our benefit
The weeks appointed for harvest."
 It is your iniquities that have diverted these things,
Your sins that have withheld the bounty from you.
 For among My people are found evildoers,
Who lurk, like

fowlers lying in wait;

^h*Who lurk, like fowlers lying in wait* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

They set up a trap to catch other people.

As a cage is full of birds,

So their houses are full of guile;

That is why they have grown so wealthy.

They have become fat and sleek;

They pass beyond the bounds of wickedness,

ⁱ*pass beyond the bounds of wickedness* Some ancient versions read "have transgressed My words for evil."

And they prosper.

They will not judge the case of the orphan,

Nor give a hearing to the plea of the needy.

Shall I not punish such deeds

—says

OD—

Shall I not bring retribution

On a nation such as this?

An appalling, horrible thing

Has happened in the land:

The prophets prophesy falsely,

And the priests rule accordingly;

^j*rule accordingly* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

And My people like it so.

But what will you do at the end of it?

Chapter 6

Flee for refuge, O people of Benjamin,

Out of the midst of Jerusalem!

Blow the horn in Tekoa,

Set up a signal at Beth-haccerem!

For evil is appearing from the north,

And great disaster.

Fair Zion, the lovely and delicate,

I will destroy.

^a*Fair Zion, the lovely and delicate, / I will destroy* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

Against her come shepherds with their flocks,

They pitch tents all around her;

Each grazes the sheep under his care.

^b*the sheep under his care* Understanding *yado* as in Ps. 95.7.

Prepare for

^c*Prepare for* Lit. "Consecrate." battle against her:

"Up! we will attack at noon."

"Alas for us! for day is declining,

The shadows of evening grow long."

"Up! let us attack by
 night,
And wreck her
 fortresses."
 For thus said G<small>OD</small>
 of Hosts:
Hew down her
 trees,
And raise a siege mound
 against Jerusalem.
She is the
 city destined for punishment;<sup class="footnote-
 marker">d</sup><i class="footnote">She is the city destined for
 punishment Emendation yields "She is the city of falseness."</i>

Only fraud is found in her
 midst.
 As a well flows with
 water,
So she flows with
 wickedness.
Lawlessness and
 rapine are heard in her;
Before
 Me constantly are sickness and wounds.
 Accept rebuke, O
 Jerusalem,
Lest I come to loathe
 you,
Lest I make you a
 desolation,
An uninhabited
 land.
 Thus said G<small>OD</small> of
 Hosts:
Let them glean<sup
 class="footnote-marker">e</sup><i class="footnote">Let them glean
 Emendation yields "Glean" (singular).</i> over and over, as a
 vine,
The remnant of
 Israel.
Pass your hand
 again,
Like a
 vintager,
Over its
 branches.
 ^f<i
 class="footnote">The prophet speaks.</i> To whom shall I
 speak,
Give warning that they may
 hear?
Their ears are
 blocked
And they cannot
 listen.
See, the word of
 G<small>OD</small> has become for them
<span class="poetry
 indentAll">An object of scorn; they will have none of it.
 But I am filled with G<small>OD</small>'s
 wrath,
I cannot hold it
 in.
Pour it on the infant in the
 street,
And on the company of
 youths gathered together!
Yes,
 men and women alike shall be captured,
<span class="poetry
 indentAll">Elders and those of advanced years.
 Their houses shall pass to
 others,
Fields and wives as
 well,
For I will stretch out My
 arm
Against the inhabitants of
 the country
—declares
 G<small>OD</small>.
 For from the smallest to the
 greatest,
They are all greedy
 for gain;
Priest and prophet
 alike,
They all act
 falsely.
 They offer healing offhand
<span
 class="poetry indentAll">For the wounds of My people,
<span
 class="poetry indentAll">Saying, "All is well, all is

well,"

When nothing is well.

They have acted shamefully;

They have done abhorrent things—

Yet they do not feel shame,

And they cannot be made to blush.

Assuredly, they shall fall among the falling,

They shall stumble at the time when I punish them

—said

OD.

Thus said

OD:

Stand by the roads and consider,

Inquire about ancient paths:

Which is the road to happiness?

Travel it, and find tranquility for yourselves.

But they said, "We will not."

And I raised up lookouts^g*lookouts* I.e., prophets. for you:

"Hearken to the sound of the horn!"

But they said, "We will not."

Hear well, O nations,

And know, O community, what is in store for them.

^h*O community, what is in store for them* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

Hear, O earth!

I am going to bring disaster upon this people,

The outcome of their own schemes;

For they would not hearken to My words,

And they rejected My Instruction.

What need have I of frankincense

That comes from Sheba,

Or fragrant cane from a distant land?

Your burnt offerings are not acceptable

And your sacrifices are not pleasing to Me.

Assuredly, thus said

OD:

I shall put before this people stumbling blocks

Over which they shall stumble—

Parents and children alike,

Neighbor and friend shall perish.

Thus said

OD:

See, a people comes from the northland,

A great nation is roused

From the remotest parts of the earth.

They grasp the bow and javelin;

They are cruel, they show no mercy;

The sound of them is like the roaring sea.

They ride upon horses,

Accoutered like a man for battle,

Against you, O Fair Zion!

"We have heard the report of them,

Our hands fail;

Pain seizes

us,

Agony like a woman in childbirth.

Do not go out into the country,

Do not walk the roads!

For the sword of the enemy is there,

Terror on every side.

My poor people,

ⁱ**My poor people** Lit. "Daughter that is My people"; so, frequently, in poetry. See 4.11 and note.

Put on sackcloth

And strew dust on yourselves!

Mourn, as for an only child;

Wail bitterly,

For suddenly the destroyer

Is coming upon us.

I have made you an assayer of My people

—A refiner

^j**refiner** Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

—You are to note and assay their ways.

They are copper and iron:

They are all stubbornly defiant;

They deal basely

^k**deal basely** See note at Lev. 19.16.

All of them act corruptly.

The bellows puff;

The lead is consumed by fire.

^l**The bellows ... fire** Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

Yet the smelter smelts to no purpose—

The dross

^m**dross** Meaning of Heb. uncertain. is not separated out.

They are called "rejected silver,"

For

OD has rejected them.

Chapter 7

The word that came to Jeremiah from OD:

Stand at the gate of the House of OD, and there proclaim this word: Hear the word of OD, all you of Judah who enter these gates to worship OD!

Thus said OD of Hosts, the God of Israel: Mend your ways and your actions, and I will let you dwell

^a**let you dwell** Meaning of Heb. uncertain. Change of vocalization yields "dwell with you"; so Aquila and Vulgate. in this place.

Don't put your trust in illusions and say, "The Temple of OD, the Temple of OD, the Temple of OD are these [buildings]."

No, if you really mend your ways and your actions; if you execute justice between one party and another;

if you do not oppress the stranger, the orphan, and the widow; if you do not shed the blood of the innocent in this place; if you do not follow other gods, to your own hurt—

then only will I let you dwell^{>b}<i class="footnote">let you dwell See note at v. 3.</i> in this place, in the land that I gave to your ancestors for all time. See, you are relying on illusions that are of no avail. Will you steal and murder and commit adultery and swear falsely, and sacrifice to Baal, and follow other gods whom you have not experienced,^c<i class="footnote">experienced See note at Deut. 11.28.</i> and then come and stand before Me in this House that bears My name and say, "We are safe"?—[Safe] to do all these abhorrent things! Do you consider this House, which bears My name, to be a den of thieves? As for Me, I have been watching—declares GOD. Just go to My place at Shiloh, where I had established My name formerly, and see what I did to it because of the wickedness of My people Israel. And now, because you do all these things—declares GOD—and though I spoke to you persistently, you would not listen; and though I called to you, you would not respond—therefore I will do to the House that bears My name, on which you rely, and to the place that I gave you and your ancestors, just what I did to Shiloh. And I will cast you out of My presence as I cast out your kinsfolk, the whole brood of Ephraim. As for you, do not pray for this people, do not raise a cry of prayer on their behalf, do not plead with Me; for I will not listen to you. Don't you see what they are doing in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? The children gather sticks, the fathers build the fire, and the mothers knead dough, to make cakes for the Queen of Heaven,^d<i class="footnote">Queen of Heaven I.e., a particular goddess who was known by this epithet.</i> and they pour libations to other gods, to vex Me. Is it Me they are vexing?—says GOD. It is rather themselves, to their own disgrace. Assuredly, thus said my Sovereign GOD: My wrath and My fury will be poured out upon this place, on human beings and on animals, on the trees of the field and the fruit of the soil. It shall burn, with none to quench it. Thus said GOD of Hosts, the God of Israel: Add your burnt offerings to your other sacrifices and eat the meat! For when I freed your ancestors from the land of Egypt, I did not speak with them or command them concerning burnt offerings or sacrifice. But this is what I commanded them: Do My bidding, that I may be your God and you may be My people; walk only in the way that I enjoin upon you, that it may go well with you. Yet they did not listen or give ear; they followed their own counsels, the willfulness of their evil hearts. They have gone backward, not forward, from the day your ancestors left the land of Egypt until today. And though I kept sending all My servants, the prophets, to them^e<i class="footnote">them Heb. "you."</i> daily and persistently, they would not listen to Me or give ear. They stiffened their necks, they acted worse than their ancestors. You shall say all these things to them, but they will not listen to you; you shall call to them, but they will not respond to you. Then say to them: This is the nation that would not obey the ETERNAL their God, that would not accept rebuke. Faithfulness has perished, vanished from their mouths. Shear your locks and cast them away,
Take up a lament on the</sup>

heights,
For
 G<small>OD</small> has spurned and cast off
<span class="poetry
 indentAll">The brood that provoked such wrath.

 For the people of Judah have done what displeases Me—declares
 G<small>OD</small>. They have set up their abominations in the House that
 is called by My name, and they have defiled it.
 And they have built the shrines of Topheth in the Valley of Ben-hinnom to
 burn their sons and daughters in fire—which I never commanded, which
 never came to My mind.
 Assuredly, a time is coming—declares G<small>OD</small>—when this
 people^f<i class="footnote">this
 people Heb. "they."</i> shall no longer speak of Topheth or the
 Valley of Ben-hinnom, but of the Valley of Slaughter; and they shall bury
 in Topheth until no room is left.
 The carcasses of this people shall be food for the birds of the sky and
 the beasts of the earth, with none to frighten them off.
 And I will silence in the towns of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem the
 sound of mirth and gladness, the voice of bridegroom and bride. For the
 whole land shall fall to ruin.

Chapter 8

At that time—declares G<small>OD</small>—the bones of the kings of Judah,
 of its officers, of the priests, of the prophets, and of the inhabitants
 of Jerusalem shall be taken out of their graves
 and exposed to the sun, the moon, and all the host of heaven that they
 loved and served and followed, to which they turned and bowed down. They
 shall not be gathered for reburial; they shall become dung upon the face
 of the earth.
 And death shall be preferable to life for all that are left of this
 wicked folk, in all the other places to which I shall banish them—
 declares G<small>OD</small> of Hosts.
 Say to them: Thus said
 G<small>OD</small>:
When people fall,
 do they not get up again?
If
 they turn aside, do they not turn back?
 Why is this people—Jerusalem—
 rebellious
With a persistent
 rebellion?
They cling to
 deceit,
They refuse to
 return.
 I have listened and heard:
<span
 class="poetry indentAll">They do not speak honestly.
<span
 class="poetry indentAll">No one regrets their own
 wickedness
And says, "What have
 I done!"
They all persist in
 their wayward course
Like a
 steed dashing forward in the fray.
 Even the stork in the sky knows its
 seasons,
And the turtledove,
 swift, and crane
Keep the time
 of their coming;
But My people
 pay no heed
To
 G<small>OD</small>'s law.
 How can you say, "We are
 wise,
And we possess
 G<small>OD</small>'s Instruction"?
<span class="poetry
 indentAll">Assuredly, for naught has the pen labored,
<span
 class="poetry indentAll">For naught the scribes!

The wise men shall be put to
 shame,
Shall be dismayed and
 caught;
See, they reject the
 word of G<small>OD</small>,
So
 their wisdom amounts to nothing.
 Assuredly, I will give their wives to
 others,
And their fields to
 dispossessors;
For from the
 smallest to the greatest,
They
 are all greedy for gain;
Priest
 and prophet alike,
They all act
 falsely.
 They offer healing offhand
<span
 class="poetry indentAll">For the wounds of My poor
 people,
Saying, "All is well,
 all is well,"
When nothing is
 well.
 They have acted
 shamefully;
They have done
 abhorrent things-
Yet they do
 not feel shame,
They cannot be
 made to blush.
Assuredly, they
 shall fall among the falling,
<span class="poetry
 indentAll">They shall stumble at the time of their doom
<span
 class="poetry indentAllDouble">-said G<small>OD</small>.
 I will make an end of them<sup
 class="footnote-marker">a</sup><i class="footnote">I will make an end
 of them Meaning of Heb. uncertain; change of vocalization yields
 "Their fruit harvest has been gathered in."</i>
<span class="poetry
 indentAllDouble">-declares G<small>OD</small>:
<span
 class="poetry indentAll">No grapes left on the vine,
<span
 class="poetry indentAll">No figs on the fig tree,
<span
 class="poetry indentAll">The leaves all withered;
<span
 class="poetry indentAll">Whatever I have given them is gone.<sup
 class="footnote-marker">b</sup><i class="footnote">Whatever I have
 given them is gone Meaning of Heb. uncertain.</i>
 Why are we sitting by?
<span
 class="poetry indentAll">Let us gather into the fortified
 cities
And meet our doom
 there.
For the
 E<small>TERNAL</small> our God has doomed us-
<span class="poetry
 indentAll">And has made us drink a bitter draft,
<span
 class="poetry indentAll">Because we sinned against
 G<small>OD</small>.
 We hoped for good fortune, but no
 happiness came;
For a time of
 relief-instead there is terror!
 The snorting of their horses was heard
 from Dan;
At the loud neighing
 of their steeds
The whole land
 quaked.
They came and devoured
 the land and what was in it,
The
 towns and those who dwelt in them.
 Lo, I will send serpents against
 you,
Adders that cannot be
 charmed,
And they shall bite
 you
-declares
 G<small>OD</small>.
 When in grief I would seek
 comfort,^c<i

class="footnote">When in grief I would seek comfort Meaning of Heb. uncertain.</i>
My heart is sick within me.

^d<i class="footnote">Here God is speaking.</i> "Is not G<small>OD</small> in Zion?
Is not her Sovereign in her midst?
Why then did they anger Me with their images,
With alien futilities?"
Hark! The outcry of my poor people
From the land far and wide:
"Harvest is past,
Summer is gone,
But we have not been saved."
Because my people is shattered I am shattered;
I am dejected, seized by desolation.
Is there no balm in Gilead?
Can no physician be found?
Why has healing not yet
Come to my poor people?
Oh, that my head were water,
My eyes a fount of tears!
Then would I weep day and night
For the slain of my poor people.

Chapter 9

Oh, to be in the desert,
At an encampment for wayfarers!
Oh, to leave my people,
To go away from them—
For they are all adulterers,
A band of rogues.
They bend their tongues like bows;
They are valorous in the land
For treachery, not for honesty;
They advance from evil to evil.
And they do not heed Me
—declares <small>OD</small>.
Each of you, beware of your friend!
Trust not even your kinsfolk!
For every sibling takes advantage,^a<i class="footnote">every sibling takes advantage Or "every brother is a heel-grabber"; cf. Gen. 25.26; 27.36.</i>
Every friend deals basely.^b<i class="footnote">deals basely See note at Lev. 19.16.</i>
They all cheat each other,
They will not speak truth;
They have trained their tongues to speak falsely;
They wear themselves out working iniquity.
You dwell in the midst of deceit.
In their deceit,^c<i

class="footnote">They wear themselves out ... In their deceit
 Meaning of Heb. uncertain.</i> they refuse to heed Me
<span
 class="poetry indentAllDouble">—declares G<small>OD</small>.
 Assuredly, thus said
 G<small>OD</small> of Hosts:
Lo, I
 shall smelt and assay them—
For
 what else can I do because of My poor people?<sup class="footnote-
 marker">d</sup><i class="footnote">For what else can I do because of
 My poor people? Meaning of Heb. uncertain.</i>
 Their tongue is a sharpened
 arrow,
They use their mouths to
 deceive.
They speak to their
 fellows in friendship,
But lay
 an ambush for them in their hearts.
 Shall I not punish them for such
 deeds?
—says
 G<small>OD</small>—
Shall I not bring
 retribution
On such a nation as
 this?
 For the mountains I take up weeping and
 wailing,
For the pastures in the
 wilderness, a dirge.
They are
 laid waste; nobody passes through,
<span class="poetry
 indentAll">And no sound of cattle is heard.
<span class="poetry
 indentAll">Birds of the sky and beasts as well
<span
 class="poetry indentAll">Have fled and are gone.
 I will turn Jerusalem into
 rubble,
Into dens for
 jackals;
And I will make the
 towns of Judah
A desolation
 without inhabitants.
 Is anybody so wise
<span
 class="poetry indentAll">As to understand this?
<span
 class="poetry indentAll">To whom has G<small>OD</small>'s mouth
 spoken,
So that it can be
 related:
Why is the land in
 ruins,
Laid waste like a
 wilderness,
With none passing
 through?

G<small>OD</small>

replied: Because they forsook the Teaching I had set before them. They
 did not obey Me and they did not follow it,
 but followed their own willful heart and followed the Baalim, as their
 ancestors had taught them.
 Assuredly, thus said G<small>OD</small> of Hosts, the God of Israel: I am
 going to feed that people wormwood and make them drink a bitter draft.
 I will scatter them among nations that they and their ancestors never
 knew; and I will dispatch the sword after them until I have consumed
 them.

Thus said G<small>OD</small> of
 Hosts:
Listen!
<span
 class="poetry indentAll">Summon the dirge-singers,<sup
 class="footnote-marker">e</sup><i class="footnote">dirge-singers
 The Heb. term denotes women.</i> let them come;
<span
 class="poetry indentAll">Send for the skilled women, let them
 come.

Let them quickly start a wailing for
 us,
That our eyes may run with

tears,

Our pupils flow with water.

For the sound of wailing

Is heard from Zion:

How we are despoiled!

How greatly we are shamed!

Ah, we must leave our land,

Abandon

^f*Abandon* Lit. "They abandoned." our dwellings!

Hear, O women, the word of

OD, Let your ears receive the divine word,

^g*divine word* Lit. "word of His mouth."

And teach your daughters wailing,

And one another lamentation.

For death has climbed through our windows,

Has entered our fortresses,

To cut off babes from the streets,

Young men from the squares.

Speak thus—says

OD: People's carcasses shall lie

Like dung upon the fields,

Like sheaves behind the reaper,

With none to pick them up.

Thus said

OD: Let not the wise glory in their wisdom;

Let not the strong glory in their strength;

Let not the rich glory in their riches.

But only in this should one glory:

In being earnestly devoted to Me.

For I

OD act with kindness,

Justice, and equity in the world;

For in these I delight

OD—declares

OD. Lo, days are coming—declares

OD—when I will take note of everyone circumcised in the foreskin:

^h*circumcised in the foreskin*

Force of Heb. uncertain.

of Egypt, Judah, Edom, the Ammonites, Moab, and all the desert dwellers who have the hair of their temples clipped. For all these nations are uncircumcised, but all the House of Israel are uncircumcised of heart.

ⁱ*uncircumcised of heart* I.e., their minds are blocked to God's commandments.

Chapter 10

Hear the word that

OD has spoken to you, O House of Israel!

Thus said

OD: Do not learn to go the way of the nations,

And do not be dismayed by portents in the sky;

Let the nations be dismayed by them!

For the laws of the nations^a<i class="footnote">the laws of the nations Emendation yields "the objects that the nations fear."</i> are delusions:
For it is the work of a craftsman's hands.
He cuts down a tree in the forest with an ax,He adorns it with silver and gold,
He fastens it^b<i class="footnote">it Heb. "them."</i> with nails and hammer,
So that it does not totter.They are like a scarecrow in a cucumber patch,
They cannot speak.
They have to be carried,
For they cannot walk.
Be not afraid of them, for they can do no harm;
Nor is it in them to do any good.O ETERNAL One, there is none like You!
You are great and Your name is great in power.Who would not revere You, O Sovereign of the nations?
For that is Your due,
Since among all the wise of the nations
And among all their royalty
There is none like You.But they are both dull and foolish;
[Their] doctrine is but delusion;^c<i class="footnote">[Their] doctrine is but delusion Meaning of Heb. uncertain.</i>
It is a piece of wood,Silver beaten flat, that is brought from Tarshish,
And gold from Uphaz,
The work of a craftsman and the goldsmith's hands;
Their clothing is blue and purple,
All of them are the product of skilled workers.But the ETERNAL is truly God-
A living God,
The everlasting Sovereign.
At God's wrath, the earth quakes,
And nations cannot endure such rage.
^d<i class="footnote">This verse is in Aramaic.</i> Thus shall you say to them: Let the gods, who did not make heaven and earth, perish from the earth and from under these heavens. [God] made the earth by might,
Established the world by wisdom,
And with understanding stretched out the skies.When [God] bellows,^e<i class="footnote">When [God] bellows Lit. "At the sound of His making."</i>
There is a rumbling of water in the skies;
Vapors rise from the end of the earth,
Lightning accompanies the rain,
And wind is brought forth from God's treasuries.

Every mortal is proved dull, without knowledge;
Every goldsmith is put to shame because of the idol,
For their molten images are a deceit—
There is no breath in them.
They are delusion, a work of mockery;
In their hour of doom, they shall perish.
Not like these is the Portion of Jacob—
The One who formed all things,
With Israel as a permanent possession—
Whose name is G<small>OD</small> of Hosts.
Gather up your bundle^f<i class="footnote">bundle Meaning of Heb. uncertain.</i> from the ground,
You who dwell under siege!
For thus said G<small>OD</small>: I will fling away the inhabitants of the land this time: I will harass them so that they shall feel it.^g<i class="footnote">feel it Emendation yields "have to leave."</i>
Woe unto me for my hurt,
My wound is severe!
I thought, "This is but a sickness
And I must bear it."
My tents are ravaged,
All my tent cords are broken.
My children have gone forth from me
And are no more;
No one is left to stretch out my tents
And hang my tent cloths.
For the shepherds^h<i class="footnote">shepherds I.e., rulers; cf. note at 2.8.</i> are dull
And did not seek G<small>OD</small>;
Therefore they have not prospered
And all their flock is scattered.
Hark, a noise! It is coming,
A great commotion out of the north,
That the towns of Judah may be made a desolation,
A haunt of jackals.
I know, O E<small>TERNAL</small> One, that mortals' road is not theirs [to choose],
That people, as they walk, cannot direct their own steps.
Chastise me, O E<small>TERNAL</small> One, but in measure;
Not in Your wrath, lest You reduce me to naught.
Pour out Your wrath on the nations who have not heeded You,
Upon the clans that have not invoked Your name.
For they have devoured Jacob,
Have devoured and consumed him,
And have laid desolate his homesteads.

The word that came to Jeremiah from GOD:

"Hear the terms of this covenant, and recite them to the citizenry of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem!

And say to them, Thus said the ETERNAL, the God of Israel: Cursed be anyone who will not obey the terms of this covenant, which I enjoined upon your ancestors when I freed them from the land of Egypt, the iron crucible, saying, 'Obey Me and observe them,^a*them* I.e., the terms of the covenant. just as I command you, that you may be My people and I may be your God'—

in order to fulfill the oath that I swore to your fathers,^b*fathers* See note at Josh. 1.6. to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, as is now the case." And I responded, "Amen, ETERNAL One." And GOD said to me, "Proclaim all these things through the towns of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem: Hear the terms of this covenant, and perform them.

For I have repeatedly and persistently warned your ancestors from^c*from* Lit.

"at." the time I brought them out of Egypt to this day, saying: Obey My commands.

But they would not listen or give ear; they all followed the willfulness of their evil hearts. So I have brought upon them all the terms^d*terms* I.e., the punishments prescribed for violation. of this covenant, because they did not do what I commanded them to do."

GOD

said to me, "A conspiracy exists among the citizenry of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

They have returned to the iniquities of their ancestors of old, who refused to heed My words. They, too, have followed other gods and served them. The House of Israel and the House of Judah have broken the covenant that I made with their ancestors."

Assuredly, thus said GOD: I am going to bring upon them disaster from which they will not be able to escape. Then they will cry out to me, but I will not listen to them.

And the townspeople^e*townspeople* Lit. "towns." of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem will go and cry out to the gods to which they sacrifice; but they will not be able to rescue them in their time of disaster.

For your gods have become as many as your towns, O Judah, and you have set up as many altars to Shame^f*Shame* See note at 3.24. as there are streets in Jerusalem—altars for sacrifice to Baal.

As for you, do not pray for this people, do not raise a cry of prayer on their behalf; for I will not listen when they call to Me on account of their disaster.

>Why should My beloved be in My House,
>Who executes so many vile designs?
>The sacral flesh will pass away from you,
>For you exult while performing your evil deeds.
^g*Who executes so many vile designs? / The sacral flesh will pass away from you, / For you exult while performing your evil deeds* Meaning of Heb. uncertain. Emendation yields "Who does such vile deeds? / Can your treacheries be canceled by sacral flesh / That you exult while performing your evil deeds?"

GOD
 named you
"Verdant olive
tree,
Fair, with choice
fruit."
But with a great roaring
sound
[God] has set it on
fire,
And its boughs are
broken.
^h
<i class="footnote">broken Emendation yields "burned."</i>

GOD

of Hosts, who planted you, has decreed disaster for you, because of the
evil wrought by the House of Israel and the House of Judah, who angered
Me by sacrificing to Baal.

GOD

 informed me, and I knew—Then
You let me see their deeds.

For I was like a docile
lamb
Led to the
slaughter;
I did not
realize
That it was against
me
They fashioned their
plots:
"Let us destroy the tree
with its fruit,
ⁱ
<i class="footnote">fruit Or "sap."</i>
Let us cut him off from the land of the
living.
That his name be
remembered no more!"

O GOD of Hosts, O
just Judge,Who test the thoughts and
the mind,
Let me see Your
retribution upon them,
For I lay
my case before You.

Assuredly, thus said GOD of Hosts concerning the people of
Anathoth^j
<i class="footnote">people
of Anathoth I.e., the local leaders, authorized to act on the town's
behalf.</i> who seek your life and say, "You must not prophesy anymore in
the name of GOD, or you will die by our hand"—

Assuredly, thus said GOD of Hosts: "I am going to deal
with them: the young men shall die by the sword, their boys and girls
shall die by famine.

No remnant shall be left of them, for I will bring disaster on the people
of Anathoth,^k
<i class="footnote">people of Anathoth See note at v. 21.</i> the
year of their doom."

Chapter 12

You will win,
^a
<i class="footnote">win Lit. "be in the right."</i>
O ETERNAL One, if I make claim against You,
Yet I shall present charges against
You:
Why does the way of the
wicked prosper?
Why are the
workers of treachery at ease?
You have planted them, and they have taken
root,
They spread, they even
bear fruit.
You are present in

their mouths,
But far from their thoughts.

Yet You, E<small>TERNAL</small>
One, have noted and observed me;
You

have tested my heart, and found it with You.
Drive them out like sheep to the slaughter,
Prepare them for the day of slaying!

How long must the land languish,
And the grass of all the countryside dry up?
Must beasts and birds perish,
Because of the evil of its inhabitants,
Who say, "[God] will not look upon our future"?^b<i class="footnote">future Septuagint reads "ways."</i>

^c<i class="footnote">God here replies to Jeremiah's plea in vv. 1-3.</i>

If you race with the foot-runners and they exhaust you,
How then can you compete with

horses?
If you are secure only^d<i class="footnote">secure only Some Septuagint mss. read "not

*secure."</i> in a tranquil land,
How will you fare in the jungle of the Jordan?*

For even your own kin and your father's house—
Even they are treacherous toward you;
They cry after you as a mob.
Do not believe them
When they speak cordially to you.

I have abandoned My House,
I have deserted My possession,
I have given over My dearly beloved
Into the hands of her enemies.

My own people^e<i class="footnote">people Lit. "possession"; the land as well as the people, as is clear in v. 14.</i> acted toward Me
Like a lion in the forest;
She raised her voice against Me—
Therefore I have rejected her.

My own people acts toward Me
Like a bird of prey [or] a hyena;
Let the birds of prey surround her!^f<i class="footnote">My own people ... surround her Meaning of Heb. uncertain.</i>
Go, gather all the wild beasts,
Bring them to devour!

Many shepherds have destroyed My vineyard,
Have trampled My field,
Have made My delightful field
A desolate wilderness.

They have^g<i class="footnote">They have Heb. "He has."</i> made her a desolation;
Desolate, she pours out grief to Me.
The whole

land is laid desolate,
But
nobody gives it thought.
Spoilers have come
<span
class="poetry indentAll">Upon all the bare heights of the
wilderness.
For a sword of
 G<small>OD</small> devours
From
one end of the land to the other;
<span class="poetry
indentAll">No flesh is safe.
They have sown wheat and reaped
thorns,
They have endured pain
to no avail.
Be shamed, then, by
your harvest—
By
G<small>OD</small>'s blazing wrath!
Thus said G<small>OD</small>: As for My wicked neighbors who encroach on
the heritage that I gave to My people Israel—I am going to uproot them
from their soil, and I will uproot the House of Judah out of the midst of
them.
Then, after I have uprooted them, I will take them back into favor, and
restore them all to their own inheritance and their own land.
And if they learn the ways of My people, to swear by My name—"As
G<small>OD</small> lives"—just as they once taught My people to swear by
Baal, then they shall be built up in the midst of<sup class="footnote-
marker">h</sup><i class="footnote">built up in the midst of Or
"incorporated into."</i> My people.
But if they do not give heed, I will tear out that nation, tear it out
and destroy it—declares G<small>OD</small>.

Chapter 13

Thus G<small>OD</small> said to me: "Go buy yourself a loincloth of
linen, and put it around your loins, but do not dip it into water."
So I bought the loincloth in accordance with G<small>OD</small>'s
command, and put it about my loins.
And the word of G<small>OD</small> came to me a second time:
"Take the loincloth that you bought, which is about your loins, and go at
once to Perath^a<i class="footnote">Perath Or "the Euphrates"; cf. "Parah," Josh.
18.23.</i> and cover it up there in a cleft of the rock."
I went and buried it at Perath, as G<small>OD</small> had commanded me.
Then, after a long time, G<small>OD</small> said to me, "Go at once to
Perath and take there the loincloth that I commanded you to bury there."
So I went to Perath and dug up the loincloth from the place where I had
buried it; and found the loincloth ruined; it was not good for anything.
The word of G<small>OD</small> came to me:
Thus said G<small>OD</small>: Even so will I ruin the overweening pride
of Judah and Jerusalem.
This wicked people who refuse to heed My bidding, who follow the
willfulness of their own hearts, who follow other gods and serve them and
worship them, shall become like that loincloth, which is not good for
anything.
For as a loincloth clings close to a man's loins, so I brought close to
Me the whole House of Israel and the whole House of Judah—declares
G<small>OD</small>—that they might be My people, for fame, and praise,
and splendor. But they would not obey.
And speak this word to them: Thus said the E<small>TERNAL</small>, the
God of Israel: "Every jar should be filled with wine." And when they say
to you, "Don't we know that every jar should be filled with wine?"
say to them, "Thus said G<small>OD</small>: I am going to fill with
drunkenness all the inhabitants of this land, and the kings who sit on

the throne of David, and the priests and the prophets, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

And I will smash them one against the other, parents and children alike—declares GOD; no pity, compassion, or mercy will stop Me from destroying them.”

Attend and give ear; be not haughty,
For GOD has spoken.

Give honor to the ETERNAL your God
Before darkness descends,
Before your feet stumble
On the mountains in shadow—
When you hope for light,
And it is turned to darkness
And becomes deep gloom.

For if you will not give heed,
My inmost self must weep,
Because of your arrogance;
My eye must stream and flow
With copious tears,
Because GOD's flock
Is taken captive.

Say to the king and the queen mother,
“Sit in a lowly spot;
For your diadems are abased,
Your glorious crowns.”

The cities of the Negeb are shut,
There is no one to open them;
Judah is exiled completely,
All of it exiled.

^bJudah is exiled completely, / All of it exiled
I.e., most of Judah has been annexed by an alien people.

Raise your eyes and behold
Those who come from the north:
Where are the sheep entrusted to you,
The flock you took pride in?

What will you say when they appoint as your heads
Those among you whom you trained to be tame?
^cWhat will you say ... to be tame? Meaning of Heb. uncertain.
Shall not pangs seize you
Like a woman in childbirth?

And when you ask yourself,
“Why have these things befallen me?”
It is because of your great iniquity
That your skirts are lifted up,
Your limbs exposed.

Can the Cushites^d change their skin,
Or leopards their spots?
Just as much can you do good,
Who are practiced in doing evil!

So I will scatter you^e<i class="footnote">you Heb. "them."</i> like straw that flies
Before the desert wind.This shall be your lot,
Your measured portion from Me
—declares G<small>OD</small>.
Because you forgot Me
And trusted in falsehood,I in turn will lift your skirts over your face
And your shame shall be seen.I behold your adulteries,
Your lustful neighing,
Your unbridled depravity, your vile acts
On the hills of the countryside.
Woe to you, O Jerusalem,
Who will not be pure!
How much longer shall it be?

Chapter 14

The word of G<small>OD</small> that came to Jeremiah concerning the droughts.

Judah is in mourning,
Her settlements languish.
They are bowed to the ground,
And the outcry of Jerusalem rises.Their nobles sent their servants for water;
They came to the cisterns, they found no water.
They returned, their vessels empty.
They are shamed and humiliated,
They cover their heads.Because of the ground there is dismay,^a<i class="footnote">Because of the ground there is dismay Meaning of Heb. uncertain.</i>
For there has been no rain on the earth.
The plowers are shamed,
They cover their heads.Even the hind in the field
Forsakes her newborn fawn,
Because there is no grass.And the wild asses stand on the bare heights,
Snuffing the air like jackals;
Their eyes pine,
Because there is no herbage.Though our iniquities testify against us,
Act, O E<small>TERNAL</small> One, for the sake of Your name;
Though our rebellions are many
And we have sinned against You.O Hope of Israel,
Its deliverer in time of trouble,
Why are You like a

stranger in the land,

Like a traveler who stops only for the night?

Why are You like a man who is stunned,

^bOr "impaired."

Like a warrior who cannot give victory?

Yet You are in our midst, O ETERNAL One,

And Your name is attached to us—

Do not forsake us!

Thus said GOD concerning this people: "Truly, they love to stray, they have not restrained their feet; so GOD has no pleasure in them. Now their iniquity will be recalled—and their sin punished."

And GOD said to me, "Do not pray for the benefit of this people.

When they fast, I will not listen to their outcry; and when they present burnt offering and grain offering, I will not accept them. I will exterminate them by war, famine, and disease."

I said, "Ah, my Sovereign GOD! The prophets are saying to them, 'You shall not see the sword, famine shall not come upon you, but I will give you unfailing security in this place.'"

GOD

replied: It is a lie that the prophets utter in My name. I have not sent them or commanded them. I have not spoken to them. A lying vision, an empty divination, the deceit of their own contriving—that is what they prophesy to you!

Assuredly, thus said GOD concerning the prophets who prophesy in My name though I have not sent them, and who say, "Sword and famine shall not befall this land"; those very prophets shall perish by sword and famine.

And the assembly to whom they prophesy shall be left lying in the streets of Jerusalem because of the famine and the sword, with none to bury them—they, their wives, their sons, and their daughters. I will pour out upon them [the requital of] their wickedness.

And do you speak to them thus:

Let my eyes run with tears,

Day and night let them not cease,

For my hapless people

^cmy hapless people

Lit. "the maiden daughter, My people." has suffered

A grievous injury, a very painful wound.

If I go out to the country—

Lo, the slain of the sword.

If I enter the city—

Lo, those who are sick with

^dthose who are sick with

Lit. "the sicknesses of." famine.

Both priest and prophet roam

^e

Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

They know not where.

Have You, then, rejected Judah?

Have You spurned Zion?

Why have You smitten us?

So that there is no cure?

Why do we hope for happiness,

But find no

good;

For a time of healing,

And meet terror instead?

We acknowledge our wickedness, O ETERNAL One—

The iniquity of our ancestors—

For we have sinned against You.

For Your name's sake, do not disown us;

Do not dishonor Your glorious throne.

Remember, do not annul Your covenant with us.

Can any of the false gods of the nations give rain?

Can the skies of themselves give showers?

Only You can, O ETERNAL One our God!

So we hope in You,

For only You made all these things.

Chapter 15

GOD

said to me, "Even if Moses and Samuel were to intercede with Me,^a *intercede with Me* Lit. "stand before Me," as Jeremiah is doing now; cf. 18.20. I would not be won over to that people. Dismiss them from My presence, and let them go forth!

And if they ask you, 'To what shall we go forth?' answer them, 'Thus said GOD:
Those destined for the plague, to the plague;
Those destined for the sword, to the sword;
Those destined for famine, to famine;
Those destined for captivity, to captivity.

And I will appoint over them four kinds^b *kinds* Meaning of Heb. uncertain. [of punishment]—declares GOD—the sword to slay, the dogs to drag, the birds of the sky, and the beasts of the earth to devour and destroy.

I will make them a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth, on account of King Manasseh son of Hezekiah of Judah, and of what he did in Jerusalem.'"

But who will pity you, O Jerusalem,
Who will console you?
Who will turn aside to inquire
About your welfare?

You cast Me off—declares GOD—
You go ever backward.
So I have stretched out My hand to destroy you;
I cannot relent.
I will scatter them as with a winnowing fork
Through the settlements of the earth.
I will bereave, I will destroy My people,
For they would not turn back from their ways.

Their widows shall be more numerous
Than the sands of the seas.
I will bring against them—

Young men and mothers
 together^c<i
 class="footnote">Young men and mothers together Meaning of Heb.
 uncertain.</i>
A destroyer at
 noonday.
I will bring down
 suddenly upon them
<span class="poetry
 indentAll">Alarm^d<i
 class="footnote">Alarm Meaning of Heb. uncertain.</i> and terror.
 She who bore seven is
 forlorn,
Utterly
 disconsolate;
Her sun has set
 while it is still day,
She is
 shamed and humiliated.
The
 remnant of them I will deliver to the sword,
<span
 class="poetry indentAll">To the power of their enemies
<span
 class="poetry indentAllDouble">—declares G<small>OD</small>.
 Woe is me, my mother, that you ever bore
 me—
A man of conflict and strife
 with all the land!
I have not
 lent,
And I have not
 borrowed;
Yet everyone curses
 me.

 G<small>OD</small>
 said:
Surely, a mere remnant
 of you
Will I spare for a better
 fate!^e<i
 class="footnote">Surely ... better fate Meaning of Heb.
 uncertain.</i>
By the enemy from the
 north^f<i
 class="footnote">from the north Moved up from v. 12 for
 clarity.</i>
In a time of distress and
 a time of disaster,
Surely, I
 will have you struck down!
 Can iron break iron and bronze?<sup
 class="footnote-marker">g</sup><i class="footnote">Can iron break iron
 and bronze? Emendation yields "[God] shall shatter iron—iron and
 bronze!"</i>
 I will hand over your wealth and your
 treasures
As a spoil, free of
 charge,
Because of all your sins
 throughout your territory.
 And I will bring your
 enemies
By way of a land you
 have not known.^h<i
 class="footnote">I will hand over ... you have not known Meaning of
 Heb. uncertain.</i>
For a fire has
 flared in My wrath,
It blazes
 against you.
 O E<small>TERNAL</small> One, you
 know—
Remember me and take thought of
 me,
Avenge me on those who
 persecute me;
Do not yield to
 Your patience,
Do not let me
 perish!ⁱ<i
 class="footnote">Do not let me perish Lit. "Do not take me
 away."</i>
Consider how I have borne
 insult
On Your account.
 When Your words were offered, I devoured
 them;
Your word brought me the

delight and joy

Of knowing that
Your name is attached to me,

O
ETERNAL One, God of Hosts.

I have not sat in the company of
revelers

And made
merry!

I have sat lonely because
of Your hand upon me,

For You
have filled me with gloom.

Why must my pain be
endless,

My wound
incurable,

Resistant to
healing?

You have been to me
like a spring that fails,

Like
waters that cannot be relied on.

Assuredly, thus said

GOD:
If you turn back, I
shall take you back

And you
shall stand before Me;

If you
produce what is noble

Out of the
worthless,

You shall be My
spokesman.

They shall come back
to you,

Not you to them.

Against this people I will make
you

As a fortified wall of
bronze:

They will attack
you,

But they shall not overcome
you,

For I am with you to
deliver and save you

—
declares

GOD.

I will save you from the hands of the
wicked

And rescue you from the
clutches of the violent.

Chapter 16

The word of GOD came to me:
You are not to marry and not to have sons and daughters in this place.
For thus said GOD concerning any sons and daughters that
may be born in this place, and concerning the mothers who bear them, and
concerning the fathers who beget them in this land:
They shall die gruesome deaths. They shall not be lamented or buried;
they shall be like dung on the surface of the ground. They shall be
consumed by the sword and by famine, and their corpses shall be food for
the birds of the sky and the beasts of the earth.

For thus said

GOD:
Do not enter a
house of mourning,

^a
mourning Lit. "religious gathering."

Do not go to lament and to condole
with them;

For I have withdrawn
My favor from that people

—declares

GOD—
My kindness and compassion.

Great and small alike shall die in this
land,

They shall not be buried;
no one shall lament them,

Nor
gash and tonsure themselves for them.

They shall not break bread

^b
bread So a few
mss. Most mss. and editions read "to them." for a mourner

class="footnote-marker">c</sup><i class="footnote">mourner Lit.
 "mourning."</i>
To offer comfort for a
 death,
Nor offer one a cup of
 consolation
For the loss of
 their father or mother.
 Nor shall you enter a house of
 feasting,
To sit down with them
 to eat and drink.

 For thus said G<small>OD</small> of Hosts, the God of Israel: I am going
 to banish from this place, in your days and before your eyes, the sound
 of mirth and gladness, the voice of bridegroom and bride.
 And when you announce all these things to that people, and they ask you,
 "Why has G<small>OD</small> decreed upon us all this fearful evil? What
 is the iniquity and what the sin that we have committed against the
 E<small>TERNAL</small> our God?"
 say to them, "Because your ancestors deserted Me—declares
 G<small>OD</small>—and followed other gods and served them and worshiped
 them; they deserted Me and did not keep My Instruction.
 And you have acted worse than your ancestors, every one of you following
 the willfulness of their own evil heart and paying no heed to Me.
 Therefore I will hurl you out of this land to a land that neither you nor
 your ancestors have known, and there you will serve other gods, day and
 night; for I will show you no mercy."
 Assuredly, a time is coming—declares G<small>OD</small>—when it shall no
 more be said, "As G<small>OD</small> lives who brought the Israelites out
 of the land of Egypt,"
 but rather, "As G<small>OD</small> lives who brought the Israelites out
 of the northland, and out of all the lands to which they had been
 banished." For I will bring them back to their land, which I gave to
 their ancestors.
 Lo, I am sending for many
 fishermen
—declares
 G<small>OD</small>—
And they
 shall haul them out;
And after
 that I will send for many hunters,
<span class="poetry
 indentAll">And they shall hunt them
<span class="poetry
 indentAll">Out of every mountain and out of every hill
<span
 class="poetry indentAll">And out of the clefts of the rocks.
 For My eyes are on all their
 ways,
They are not hidden from
 My presence,
Their iniquity is
 not concealed from My sight.
 I will pay them in full<sup
 class="footnote-marker">d</sup><i class="footnote">full See note
 to Isa. 65.7.</i>—
Nay, doubly for
 their iniquity and their sins—
<span class="poetry
 indentAll">Because they have defiled My land
<span
 class="poetry indentAll">With the corpses of their
 abominations,^e<i
 class="footnote">their abominations I.e., their lifeless
 idols.</i>
And have filled My own
 possession
With their abhorrent
 things.
 O E<small>TERNAL</small> One, my
 strength and my stronghold,
My refuge
 in a day of trouble,
To You
 nations shall come
From the ends
 of the earth and say:
Our
 ancestors inherited utter delusions,
<span class="poetry
 indentAll">Things that are futile and worthless.

Can mortals make gods for themselves?
No-gods are they!
 Assuredly, I will teach them,
Once and for all I will teach them
My power and My might.
And they shall learn that My name is G<small>OD</small>.

Chapter 17

The guilt of Judah is inscribed
With a stylus of iron,
Engraved with an adamant point
On the tablet of their hearts,
And on the horns of their altars,
 While their children remember^a<i class="footnote">And on the horns of their altars, / While their children remember Meaning of Heb. uncertain. Emendation yields "Surely the horns of their altars / Are as a memorial against them."</i>
Their altars and sacred posts,^b<i class="footnote">sacred posts Used in worship of the goddess Asherah.</i>
By verdant trees,
Upon lofty hills.
 ^c<i class="footnote">Meaning of verse uncertain.</i> Because of the sin of your shrines
Throughout your borders,
I will make your rampart a heap in the field,
And all your treasures a spoil.
 You will forfeit,^d<i class="footnote">You will forfeit Meaning of Heb. uncertain. Emendation yields "Your hand must let go."</i> by your own act,
The inheritance I have given you;
I will make you a slave to your enemies
In a land you have never known.
For you have kindled the flame of My wrath
That shall burn for all time.
 Thus said G<small>OD</small>:
Cursed is the man who trusts in mortals,
Who makes mere flesh his strength,
And turns his thoughts from G<small>OD</small>.
 He shall be like a bush^e<i class="footnote">bush Or "tamarisk"; exact meaning of Heb. uncertain.</i> in the desert,
Which does not sense the coming of good:
It is set in the scorched places of the wilderness,
In a barren land without inhabitant.
 Blessed is the man who trusts in G<small>OD</small>,
Whose trust is G<small>OD</small> alone.
 He shall be like a tree planted by waters,
Sending forth its roots by a stream:
It does not sense the coming of heat,
Its leaves

are ever fresh;

It has no care in a year of drought,

It does not cease to yield fruit.

Most devious is the heart;

It is perverse—who can fathom it?

I GOD probe the heart,

Search the mind—

To repay each person according to their own ways,

With the proper fruit of their deeds.

Like a partridge hatching what she did not lay

^f*Like a partridge hatching what she did not lay* Meaning of Heb. uncertain. Or “Like a partridge brooding what does not hatch.” Typically, the partridge lays many eggs on open ground, few of which survive.

So are those who amass wealth by unjust means;

In mid-life it will leave them,

And in the end they will be proved fools.

O Throne of Glory exalted from of old,

Our Sacred Shrine!

O Hope of Israel! O

ETERNAL One!

All who forsake You shall be put to shame,

Those in the land who turn from You

^g*You* Lit. “Me.”

Shall be doomed,

^h*doomed* Lit. “inscribed”; meaning of line uncertain.

For they have forsaken GOD,

The Fount of living waters.

Heal me, O

ETERNAL One, and let me be healed;

Save me, and let me be saved;

For You are my glory.

See, they say to me:

“Where is GOD’s prediction?”

Let it come to pass!”

But I have not evaded

Being a shepherd in your service,

ⁱ*evaded* / Being a shepherd in your service Exact force of Heb. uncertain. Emendation yields “urged you to [bring] misfortune.”

Nor have I longed for the fatal day.

You know the utterances of my lips,

They were ever before You.

Do not be a cause of dismay to me;

You are my refuge in a day of calamity.

Let my persecutors be shamed,

And let not me be shamed;

Let them be dismayed,

And let not me be dismayed.

Bring on them the day of disaster,

And shatter them with double destruction.

Thus said GOD to me: Go and stand in the People's Gate, by which the kings of Judah enter and by which they go forth, and in all the gates of Jerusalem,

and say to them: Hear the word of GOD, O kings of Judah, and all Judah, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem who enter by these gates!

Thus said GOD: Guard yourselves for your own sake against carrying burdens^{class="footnote-marker">j}*class="footnote">burdens Or "merchandise."* on the sabbath day, and bringing them through the gates of Jerusalem.

Nor shall you carry out burdens from your houses on the sabbath day, or do any work, but you shall hallow the sabbath day, as I commanded your ancestors.

(But they would not listen or turn their ear; they stiffened their necks and would not pay heed or accept discipline.)

If you obey Me—declares GOD—and do not bring in burdens through the gates of this city on the sabbath day, but hallow the sabbath day and do no work on it,

then through the gates of this city shall enter kings who sit upon the throne of David, with their officers—riding on chariots and horses, they and their officers—and the citizenry of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And this city shall be inhabited for all time.

And people shall come from the towns of Judah and from the environs of Jerusalem, and from the land of Benjamin, and from the Shephelah, and from the hill country, and from the Negeb, bringing burnt offerings and sacrifices, grain offerings and frankincense, and bringing offerings of thanksgiving to the House of GOD.

But if you do not obey My command to hallow the sabbath day and to carry in no burdens through the gates of Jerusalem on the sabbath day, then I will set fire to its gates; it shall consume the fortresses of Jerusalem and it shall not be extinguished.

Chapter 18

The word that came to Jeremiah from GOD:

"Go down to the house of a potter, and there I will impart My words to you."

So I went down to the house of a potter, and found him working at the wheel.

And if the vessel he was making was spoiled, as happens to clay in the potter's hands,^{class="footnote-marker">a}*class="footnote">And if the vessel he was making was spoiled, as happens to clay in the potter's hands So some mss. and one early edition. Most mss. and editions read "And if the vessel that he was making with clay in the potter's hands was spoiled."* he would make it into another vessel, such as the potter saw fit to make.

Then the word of GOD came to me:

O House of Israel, can I not deal with you like this potter?—says GOD. Just like clay in the hands of the potter, so are you in My hands, O House of Israel!

At one moment I may decree that a nation or a kingdom shall be uprooted and pulled down and destroyed;

but if that nation against which I made the decree turns back from its wickedness, I change My mind concerning the punishment I planned to bring on it.

At another moment I may decree that a nation or a kingdom shall be built and planted;

but if it does what is displeasing to Me and does not obey Me, then I change My mind concerning the good I planned to bestow upon it.

And now, say to the citizenry of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: Thus said GOD: I am devising ^bdisaster for you and laying plans against you. Turn back, each of you, from your wicked ways, and mend your ways and your actions!

But they will say, "It is no use. We will keep on following our own plans; each of us will act in the willfulness of our own evil heart."

Assuredly, thus said

GOD:
Inquire among the nations:
Who has heard anything like this?
Maiden Israel has done
A most horrible thing.

^c
Meaning of verse uncertain; cf. 2.13; 17.13.

Does one forsake Lebanon snow
From the mountainous rocks?
Does one abandon cool water
Flowing from afar?

Yet My people have forgotten

Me:
They sacrifice to a delusion:
They are made to stumble in their ways—
The ancient paths—
And to walk instead on byways,
On a road not built up.

So their land will become a desolation,
An object of hissing for all time.
Every passerby will be appalled
And will shake their head.
^d
hissing...shake their head
Observers of ruin performed these actions, to ward off a like fate for themselves; cf. Lam. 2.15.

Like the east wind, I will scatter them
Before the enemy.
I will look upon their back, not their face,
^e
I will look upon their back, not their face
Change of vocalization yields "I will show them [My] back and not [My] face."
In their day of disaster.

^f
They said,
Cf. 20.10. "Come let us devise a plot against Jeremiah—for instruction shall not fail from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor oracle from the prophet. Come, let us strike him with the tongue, and we shall no longer have to listen to all those words of his."

Listen to me, O

ETERNAL One—
And take note of what my enemies say!
^g
what my enemies say
Emendation yields "my case."

Should good be repaid with evil?
Yet they have dug a pit for me.
Remember how I stood before You
To plead in their behalf,
To turn Your anger away from them!

>Oh, give their children over to
famine,
Mow them down by the
sword.
Let their wives be
bereaved
Of children and
husbands,
Let their
men^h<i
class="footnote">their men I.e., their subordinates.</i> be struck
down by the plague,
And their young men
be slain in battle by the sword.
Let an outcry be heard from their
houses
When You bring sudden
marauders against them;
For they
have dug a pit to trap me,
And
laid snares for my feet.
O ETERNAL One, You
know
All their plots to kill
me.
Do not pardon their
iniquity,
Do not blot out their
guilt from Your presence.
Let
them be made to stumble before You-
<span class="poetry
indentAll">Act against them in Your hour of wrath!

Chapter 19

Thus said GOD: Go buy a jug of potter's ware. And [take]
some of the elders of the people and the priests,
and go out to the Valley of Ben-hinnom—at the entrance of the Harsith
Gate^a<i class="footnote">at the
entrance of the Harsith Gate In contrast to others "by way of the
Potsherd Gate"; meaning of Heb. uncertain.</i>—and proclaim there the
words that I will speak to you.

Say: "Hear the word of GOD, O kings of Judah and
inhabitants of Jerusalem! Thus said GOD of Hosts, the God
of Israel: I am going to bring such disaster upon this place that the
ears of all who hear about it will tingle.

For they and their ancestors and the kings of Judah have forsaken Me, and
have made this place alien [to Me]; they have sacrificed in it to other
gods whom they have not experienced,<sup class="footnote-
marker">b</sup><i class="footnote">experienced See note at Deut.
11.28.</i> and they have filled this place with the blood of the
innocent.

They have built shrines to Baal, to put their children to the fire as
burnt offerings to Baal—which I never commanded, never decreed, and which
never came to My mind.

Assuredly, a time is coming—declares GOD—when this place
shall no longer be called Topheth or Valley of Ben-hinnom, but Valley of
Slaughter.

"And I will frustrate^c<i
class="footnote">frustrate Lit. "empty," Heb. <i>u-baqqothi</i>, a
play on <i>baqbuq</i>, "jug" in v. 1.</i> the plans of Judah and
Jerusalem in this place. I will cause them to fall by the sword before
their enemies, by the hand of those who seek their lives; and I will give
their carcasses as food to the birds of the sky and the beasts of the
earth.

And I will make this city an object of horror and hissing;<sup
class="footnote-marker">d</sup><i class="footnote">hissing See
note at 18.16.</i> everyone who passes by it will be appalled and will
hiss over all its wounds.

And I will cause them to eat the flesh of their sons and the flesh of
their daughters, and they shall devour one another's flesh—because of the

desperate straits to which they will be reduced by their enemies, who seek their life."

Then you shall smash the jug in the sight of those who go with you, and say to them: "Thus said GOD of Hosts: So will I smash this people and this city, as one smashes a potter's vessel, which can never be mended. And they shall bury in Topheth until no room is left for burying.

That is what I will do to this place and its inhabitants—declares GOD. I will make this city like Topheth:

the houses of Jerusalem and the houses of the kings of Judah shall be impure, like that place Topheth—all the houses on the roofs of which offerings were made to the whole host of heaven and libations were poured out to other gods."

When Jeremiah returned from Topheth, where GOD had sent him to prophesy, he stood in the court of the House of GOD and said to all the people:

"Thus said GOD of Hosts, the God of Israel: I am going to bring upon this city and upon all its villages all the disaster that I have decreed against it, for they have stiffened their necks and refused to heed My words."

Chapter 20

Pashhur son of Immer, the priest who was chief officer of the House of GOD, heard Jeremiah prophesy these things.

Pashhur thereupon had Jeremiah flogged and put in the cell^a*cell* Meaning of Heb. uncertain. at the Upper Benjamin Gate in the House of GOD.

The next day, Pashhur released Jeremiah from the cell. But Jeremiah said to him, "GOD has named you not Pashhur, but Magor-missabib.^b*Magor-missabib* I.e., "Terror all around"; cf. v. 10.

For thus said GOD: I am going to deliver you and all your friends over to terror: they will fall by the sword of their enemies while you look on. I will deliver all Judah into the hands of the king of Babylon; he will exile them to Babylon or put them to the sword. And I will deliver all the wealth, all the riches, and all the prized possessions of this city, and I will also deliver all the treasures of the kings of Judah into the hands of their enemies: they shall seize them as plunder and carry them off to Babylon.

As for you, Pashhur, and all who live in your house, you shall go into captivity. You shall come to Babylon; there you shall die and there you shall be buried, and so shall all your friends to whom you prophesied falsely."

You enticed me, O

ETERNAL One, and I was enticed;
You overpowered me and You prevailed.

I have become a constant laughingstock,
Everyone jeers at me.

For every time I speak, I must cry out,
Must shout, "Lawlessness and rapine!"
For the word of
GOD causes me
Constant disgrace and contempt.

I thought, "I will not mention it,
No more will I speak in God's name"—
But [the divine

word] was like a raging fire in my heart,

Shut up in my bones;

I could not hold it in, I was helpless.

I heard the whispers of the crowd—

Terror all around:

“Inform! Let us inform against him!”

All my [supposed] friends

Are waiting for me to stumble:

“Perhaps he can be entrapped,

And we can prevail against him

And take our vengeance on him.”

But OD is with me like a mighty warrior;

Therefore my persecutors shall stumble;

They shall not prevail and shall not succeed.

They shall be utterly shamed

With a humiliation for all time,

Which shall not be forgotten.

O OD of Hosts, You who test the righteous,

Who examine the heart and the mind,

Let me see Your retribution upon them,

For I lay my case before You.

Sing unto OD,

Praise OD—

Who has rescued the needy

From the hands of evildoers!

Accursed be the day

That I was born!

Let not the day be blessed

When my mother bore me!

Accursed be the man

Who brought my father the news

And said, “A boy

Is born to you,”

And gave him such joy!

Let that man become like the cities

^c*the cities* I.e., Sodom and Gomorrah; cf. Gen. 19.24-25.

That OD overthrew without relenting!

Let him hear shrieks in the morning

And battle shouts at noontide—

Because [God]

^d*[God]* Or “he,” i.e., the message-bearer of vv. 15-16.

did not kill me before birth

So that my mother might be my grave,

And her womb big [with me] for all time.

Why did I ever issue from the womb,

To see misery and woe,

To spend all my days in shame!

The word that came to Jeremiah from GOD—when King Zedekiah sent to him Pashhur son of Malchiah and the priest Zephaniah, son of Maaseiah, to say,

"Please inquire of GOD on our behalf, for King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon is attacking us. Perhaps GOD will act for our sake in accordance with all the prior^a*the prior Lit. "His."* wonders, so that he will withdraw from us."

Jeremiah answered them, "Thus shall you say to Zedekiah:

Thus said the ETERNAL, the God of Israel: I am going to turn around the weapons in your hands with which you are battling outside the wall against those who are besieging you—the king of Babylon and the Chaldeans—and I will take them into the midst of this city; and I Myself will battle against you with an outstretched mighty arm, with anger and rage and great wrath.

I will strike the inhabitants of this city, both human and animal: they shall die by a terrible pestilence.

And then—declares GOD—I will deliver King Zedekiah of Judah and his courtiers and the people—those in this city who survive the pestilence, the sword, and the famine—into the hands of King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, into the hands of their enemies, into the hands of those who seek their lives. He will put them to the sword without pity, without compassion, without mercy.

"And to this people you shall say: Thus said GOD: I set before you the way of life and the way of death.

Whoever remains in this city shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence; but whoever leaves and goes over to the Chaldeans who are besieging you shall live; he shall at least gain his life.^b*he shall at least gain his life Lit. "he shall have his life as booty."*

For I have set My face against this city for evil and not for good—declares GOD. It shall be delivered into the hands of the king of Babylon, who will destroy it by fire."

To the House of the king of Judah: Hear the word of GOD!

O House of David, thus said GOD:
Render just verdicts
Morning by morning;
Rescue from the defrauder
Anyone who is robbed.
Else My wrath will break forth like fire
And burn, with none to quench it,
Because of your wicked acts.

I will deal with you, O inhabitants of the valley,
O rock of the plain^c*O inhabitants of the valley, / O rock of the plain Force of Heb. uncertain.</i>—declares GOD—
You who say, "Who can come down against us?"
Who can get into our lairs?"*

I will punish you according to your deeds
—declares GOD.
I will set fire to its forest;^d*forest Perhaps a reference to the royal palace; cf. 1 Kings 7.2.</i>
It shall consume all that is around it.*

Thus said GOD: Go down to the palace of the king of Judah, where you shall utter this word.

Say: "Hear the word of GOD: O king of Judah, you who sit on the throne of David, and your courtiers and your subjects who enter these gates!

Thus said GOD: Do what is just and right; rescue from the defrauder anyone who is robbed; do not wrong the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow; commit no lawless act, and do not shed the blood of the innocent in this place.

For if you fulfill this command, then through the gates of this palace shall enter kings of David's line who sit upon his throne, riding horse-drawn chariots, with their courtiers and their subjects.

But if you do not heed these commands, I swear by Myself—declares GOD—that this palace shall become a ruin."

For thus said GOD concerning the royal palace of Judah:
You are as Gilead to Me,
As the summit of Lebanon;
But I will make you a desert,
Uninhabited towns.

I will appoint destroyers against you,
Each with his tools;
They shall cut down your choicest cedars
And make them fall into the fire.

And when many nations pass by this city and people ask one another, "Why did GOD do thus to that great city?"

the reply will be, "Because they forsook the covenant with the ETERNAL their God and bowed down to other gods and served them."

Do not weep for the dead^a*the dead* I.e., Josiah; see 2 Kings 23.29–30.
And do not lament for him;
Weep rather for him who is leaving,^b*him who is leaving* I.e., the king called by his throne name Jehoahaz in 2 Kings 23.31ff., and by his private name Shallum here in v. 11 and in 1 Chron. 3.15.
For he shall never come back
To see the land of his birth!
For thus said GOD concerning Shallum^c*Shallum* See the second note at v. 10.
son of King Josiah of Judah, who succeeded his father Josiah as king, but who has gone forth from this place: He shall never come back.

He shall die in the place to which he was exiled, and he shall not see this land again.

Ha! He^d*He* Presumably Jehoiakim son of King Josiah; cf. v. 18. who builds his house with unfairness
And his upper chambers with injustice,
Who makes his neighbors work without pay
And does not give them their wages,

Who thinks: I will build me a vast palace
With spacious upper chambers,
Provided with windows,
Paneled in cedar,
Painted with vermilion!

>Do you think you are more a king

>Because you compete in cedar?

>Your father ate and drank^e<i class="footnote">ate and drank I.e., he was content with the simple necessities of life.</i>

>And dispensed justice and equity

>Then all went well with him.
>He upheld the rights of the poor and needy

>Then all was well.

>That is truly heeding Me^f<i class="footnote">That is truly heeding Me Or "That is the reward for heeding Me."</i>

>declares
G<small>OD</small>.
>But your eyes and your mind are only

>On ill-gotten gains,

>On shedding the blood of the innocent,

>On committing fraud and violence.

Assuredly, thus said G<small>OD</small> concerning Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah:

>They shall not mourn for him,

>"Ah, brother! Ah, sister!"^g<i class="footnote">Ah, brother ... sister Typical expressions of sorrow at the loss of a relative.</i>

>They shall not mourn for him,

>"Ah, lord! Ah, his majesty!"^h<i class="footnote">Ah, lord ... majesty Typical expressions of sorrow at the death of a ruler.</i>
>He shall have the burial of a donkey,

>Dragged out and left lying

>Outside the gates of Jerusalem.
>ⁱ<i class="footnote">Israel is addressed.</i> Climb Lebanon and cry out,

>Raise your voice in Bashan,

>Cry out from Abarim,

>For all your lovers are crushed.
>I spoke to you when you were prosperous;

>You said, "I will not listen."

>That was your way ever since your youth,

>You would not heed Me.
>All your shepherds^j<i class="footnote">shepherds Change of vocalization yields "paramours."</i> shall be devoured by the wind,

>And your lovers shall go into captivity.

>Then you shall be shamed and humiliated

>Because of all your depravity.
>You who dwell in Lebanon,

>Nestled among the cedars,

>How much grace will you have^k<i class="footnote">How much grace will you have Septuagint reads "How you will groan."</i>

>When pains come upon you,

>Travail as in childbirth!

As I live—declares GOD—if you, O King Coniah,¹ *if you, O King Coniah* Heb. 3rd person. Coniah (Jeconiah in 24.1) is identical with Jehoiachin, 2 Kings 24.8ff. son of Jehoiakim, of Judah, were a signet on my right hand, I would tear you off even from there. I will deliver you into the hands of those who seek your life, into the hands of those you dread, into the hands of King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon and into the hands of the Chaldeans. I will hurl you and the mother who bore you into another land, where you were not born; there you shall both die. They shall not return to the land that they yearn to come back to.

Is this man Coniah
A wretched broken pot,
A vessel no one wants?
Why are he and his offspring hurled out,
And cast away in a land they knew not?

O land, land, land,
Hear the word of GOD!
Thus said

GOD:
Record this man as without succession,
One who shall never be found acceptable;
For none of his offspring shall be accepted
To sit on the throne of David
And to rule again in Judah.

Chapter 23

Ah, shepherds who let the flock of My pasture stray and scatter!—declares GOD.
 Assuredly, thus said the ETERNAL, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who should tend My people: It is you who let My flock scatter and go astray. You gave no thought to them, but I am going to give thought to you, for your wicked acts—declares GOD. And I Myself will gather the remnant of My flock from all the lands to which I have banished them, and I will bring them back to their pasture, where they shall be fertile and increase. And I will appoint over them shepherds who will tend them; they shall no longer fear or be dismayed, and none of them shall be missing—declares GOD.
 See, a time is coming—declares GOD—when I will raise up a true branch of David's line. He shall reign as king and shall prosper, and he shall do what is just and right in the land. In his days Judah shall be delivered and Israel shall dwell secure. And this is the name by which he shall be called: "GOD is our Vindicator."^a *GOD is our Vindicator* Heb. *Yhwh šidqenu*. Presumably a play on the name of King Zedekiah.
 Assuredly, a time is coming—declares GOD—when it shall no more be said, "As GOD lives, who brought the Israelites out of the land of Egypt," but rather, "As GOD lives, who brought out and led the offspring of the House of Israel from the northland and from all the lands to which I have banished them." And they shall dwell upon their own soil.

Concerning the prophets.
My heart is crushed within me,
All my bones are trembling;^b *trembling*

Meaning of Heb. uncertain.
I have become like someone drunk,
Like one overcome by wine—
Because of GOD and because of God's holy word.

For the land is full of adulterers,
The land mourns because of a curse; ^c
a curse A few Heb. mss. and Septuagint read "these."
The pastures of the wilderness are dried up.
For they run to do evil,
They strain to do wrong. ^d
For they run to do evil, / They strain to do wrong
Lit. "Their running is wickedness, / Their straining is iniquity."

For both prophet and priest are godless;
Even in My House I find their wickedness
—declares GOD.

Assuredly,
Their path shall become
Like slippery ground;
They shall be thrust into darkness
And there they shall fall;
For I will bring disaster upon them,
The year of their doom
—declares GOD.

In the prophets of Samaria
I saw a repulsive thing:
They prophesied by Baal
And led My people Israel astray.
But what I see in the prophets of Jerusalem
Is something horrifying:
Adultery and false dealing.
They encourage evildoers,
So that no one turns back from their own wickedness.
To Me they are all like Sodom,
And [all] its inhabitants like Gomorrah.
Assuredly, thus said GOD of Hosts concerning the prophets:
I am going to make them eat wormwood
And drink a bitter draft;
For from the prophets of Jerusalem
Godlessness has gone forth to the whole land.

Thus said GOD of Hosts:
Do not listen to the words of the prophets
Who prophesy to you.
They are deluding you,
The prophecies they speak are from their own minds,
Not from the mouth of GOD.

They declare to those who despise Me:
GOD has said:
"All shall be well with you";
And to all who follow their willful hearts they say:
"No evil shall befall you."

But he who has stood in
 G<small>OD</small>'s council,
<span class="poetry
 indentAll">And seen, and heard God's word—
<span class="poetry
 indentAll">He who has listened to that word must obey.<sup
 class="footnote-marker">e</sup><i class="footnote">obey Change of
 vocalization yields "announce it"; cf. vv. 22, 28.</i>
 Lo, G<small>OD</small>'s storm goes forth
 in fury,
A whirling
 storm,
It shall whirl down upon
 the heads of the wicked.
 The anger of G<small>OD</small>
 shall not turn back
Till it has
 fulfilled and completed God's purposes.<sup class="footnote-
 marker">f</sup><i class="footnote">Lo, G<small>OD</small>'s storm ...
 completed God's purposes The word of God that Jeremiah referred to in
 v. 18.</i>
In the days to
 come
You shall clearly perceive
 it.
 I did not send those
 prophets,
But they rushed
 in;
I did not speak to
 them,
Yet they
 prophesied.
 If they have stood in My
 council,
Let them announce My
 words to My people
And make them
 turn back
From their evil ways
 and wicked acts.
 Am I only a God near at
 hand
—says
 G<small>OD</small>—
And not a God far
 away?
 If somebody enters a hiding
 place,
Do I not see
 them?
—says
 G<small>OD</small>.
For I fill both
 heaven and earth
—declares
 G<small>OD</small>.
 I have heard what the prophets say, who prophesy falsely in My name: "I
 had a dream, I had a dream."
 How long will there be^g<i class="footnote">How long will there be Meaning of Heb.
 uncertain.</i> in the minds of the prophets who prophesy falsehood—the
 prophets of their own deceitful minds—
 the plan to make My people forget My name, by means of the dreams that
 they tell each other, just as their ancestors forgot My name because of
 Baal?
 Let the prophet who has a dream tell the dream; and let the one who has
 received My word report My word faithfully! How can straw be compared to
 grain?—says G<small>OD</small>.
 Behold, My word is like fire—declares G<small>OD</small>—and like a
 hammer that shatters rock!
 Assuredly, I am going to deal with the prophets—declares
 G<small>OD</small>—who steal My words from one another.
 I am going to deal with the prophets—declares G<small>OD</small>—who
 wag^h<i class="footnote">wag
 Meaning of Heb. uncertain.</i> their tongues and make oracular
 utterances.
 I am going to deal with those who prophesy lying dreams—declares
 G<small>OD</small>—who relate them to lead My people astray with their

reckless lies, when I did not send them or command them. They do this people no good—declares GOD.

And when this people—or a prophet or a priest—asks you, “What is the burden^{*I.e., pronouncement; cf. Isa. 13.1; 15.1, etc., where the word rendered “pronouncement” can also mean “burden.”*} of GOD?” you shall answer them, “What is the burden^{*Septuagint and other versions read “You are the burden!”*} of GOD?”—declares GOD.

As for the prophet or priest or layperson who shall say “the burden of GOD,” I will punish them and their household.

Thus you shall all speak to your neighbors and to your kin, “What has GOD answered?” or “What has GOD spoken?”

But do not mention “the burden of GOD” anymore. Does anyone regard their own word as a “burden,”^{*Does anyone regard their own word as a “burden”*} Meaning of Heb. uncertain. that you pervert the words of the living God, GOD of Hosts, our God?

Thus you shall speak to the prophet: “What did GOD answer you?” or “What did GOD speak?”

But if you say “the burden of GOD”—assuredly, thus said GOD: Because you said this thing, “the burden of GOD,” whereas I sent word to you not to say “the burden of GOD,”

I will utterly forget you^{*forget you*} Some Heb. mss., Septuagint, and other versions read “lift you up,” a word from the same root as “burden.” and I will cast you away from My presence, together with the city that I gave to you and your ancestors.

And I will lay upon you a disgrace for all time, shame for all time, which shall never be forgotten.

Chapter 24

GOD

showed me two baskets of figs, placed in front of the Temple of GOD. This was after King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon had exiled King Jeconiah son of Jehoiakim of Judah, and the officials of Judah, and the artisans and smiths, and had brought them from Jerusalem to Babylon.

One basket contained very good figs, like first-ripened figs, and the other basket contained very bad figs, so bad that they could not be eaten.

And GOD said to me, “What do you see, Jeremiah?” I answered, “Figs—the good ones are very good, and the bad ones very bad, so bad that they cannot be eaten.”

Then the word of GOD came to me:

Thus said the ETERNAL, the God of Israel: As with these good figs, so will I single out for good the Judean exiles whom I have driven out from this place to the land of the Chaldeans.

I will look upon them favorably, and I will bring them back to this land; I will build them and not overthrow them; I will plant them and not uproot them.

And I will give them the understanding to acknowledge Me, for I am GOD. And they shall be My people and I will be their God, when they turn back to Me with all their heart.

And like the bad figs, which are so bad that they cannot be eaten—thus said GOD—so will I treat King Zedekiah of Judah and his

officials and the remnant of Jerusalem that is left in this land, and those who are living in the land of Egypt:

I will make them a horror—an evil—to all the kingdoms of the earth, a disgrace and a proverb, a byword and a curse^a*a curse* I.e., a standard by which people curse; cf. Gen. 12.2 and note; Zech. 8.13. in all the places to which I banish them.

I will send the sword, famine, and pestilence against them until they are exterminated from the land that I gave to them and their ancestors.

Chapter 25

The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah, in the fourth year of King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah, which was the first year of King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon.

This is what the prophet Jeremiah said to all the people of Judah and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem:

From the thirteenth year of King Josiah son of Amon of Judah, to this day—these twenty-three years—the word of GOD has come to me. I have spoken to you persistently, but you would not listen.

Moreover, GOD constantly sent all his servants the prophets to you, but you would not listen or incline your ears to hear when they said, “Turn back, every one, from your evil ways and your wicked acts, that you may remain throughout the ages on the soil that GOD gave to you and your ancestors.

Do not follow other gods, to serve them and worship them. Do not vex Me with what your own hands have made,^a*what your own hands have made* I.e., idols. and I will not bring disaster upon you.”

But you would not listen to Me—declares GOD—but vexed Me with what your hands made, to your own hurt.

Assuredly, thus said GOD of Hosts: Because you would not listen to My words,

I am going to send for all the peoples of the north—declares GOD—and for My servant, King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, and bring them against this land and its inhabitants, and against all those nations round about. I will exterminate them and make them a desolation, an object of hissing^b*hissing* Cf. note at 18.16.—ruins for all time.

And I will banish from them the sound of mirth and gladness, the voice of bridegroom and bride, and the sound of the mill and the light of the lamp.

This whole land shall be a desolate ruin. And those nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

When the seventy years are over, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation and the land of the Chaldeans for their sins—declares GOD—and I will make it a desolation for all time.

And I will bring upon that land all that I have decreed against it, all that is recorded in this book—that which Jeremiah prophesied against all the nations.

For they too shall be enslaved by many nations and great kings; and I will requite them according to their acts and according to their conduct. For thus said the ETERNAL, the God of Israel, to me: “Take from My hand this cup of wine—of wrath—and make all the nations to whom I send you drink of it.

Let them drink and retch and act crazy, because of the sword that I am sending among them.”

So I took the cup from GOD's hand and gave drink to all the nations to whom GOD had sent me:

Jerusalem and the towns of Judah, and its kings and officials, to make them a desolate ruin, an object of hissing^c*hissing* Cf. note at 18.16. and a curse^d*a curse* Cf. note at 24.9.—as is now the case; Pharaoh king of Egypt, his courtiers, his officials, and all his people; all the mixed peoples^e*the mixed peoples* Meaning of Heb. uncertain. all the kings of the land of Uz; all the kings of the land of the Philistines—Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron, and what is left of Ashdod; Edom, Moab, and Ammon; all the kings of Tyre and all the kings of Sidon, and all the kings of the coastland across the sea; Dedan, Tema, and Buz, and all those who have their hair clipped; all the kings of Arabia, and all the kings of the mixed peoples^f*the mixed peoples* Meaning of Heb. uncertain. who live in the desert; all the kings of Zimri^g*Zimri* Meaning of Heb. uncertain. and all the kings of Elam and all the kings of Media; all the kings of the north, whether far from or close to each other—all the royal lands that are on the earth.^h*royal lands that are on the earth* Meaning of Heb. uncertain. And last of all, the king of Sheshachⁱ*Sheshach* A cipher for *Babel* “Babylon.” shall drink.

Say to them: “Thus said GOD of Hosts, the God of Israel: Drink and get drunk and vomit; fall and never rise again, because of the sword that I send among you.”

And if they refuse to take the cup from your hand and drink, say to them, “Thus said GOD of Hosts: You must drink!

If I am bringing the punishment first on the city that bears My name, do you expect to go unpunished? You will not go unpunished, for I am summoning the sword against all the inhabitants of the earth—declares GOD of Hosts.”

You are to prophesy all those things to them, and then say to them:
GOD roars from on high,
And bellows from the holy dwelling—
Roaring aloud over the [earthly] abode
And uttering shouts like the grape-treaders—
Against all the dwellers on earth.
Tumult has reached the ends of the earth,
For
 GOD has a case against the nations,
And contends with all flesh—
Delivering the wicked to the sword
—declares GOD.
Thus said GOD of Hosts:
Disaster goes forth
From nation to nation;
A great storm is unleashed
From the remotest parts of earth.
 In that day, the earth shall be strewn with the slain of GOD from one end to the other. They shall not be mourned, or gathered and buried; they shall become dung upon the face of the earth.

Howl, you shepherds, and
yell, Strew [dust] on
yourselves, you lords of the flock!
For the day of your slaughter draws near.
I will break you in pieces,
^j*I will break you in
pieces* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.
And you shall fall like a precious vessel.
Flight shall fail the
shepherds, And escape, the lords
of the flock.
Hark, the outcry of the
shepherds, And the howls of the
lords of the flock! For OD is ravaging their pasture.
The peaceful meadows shall be wiped
out By OD's
fierce wrath.
Like a lion [God] has gone forth from the
lair; The land has become a
desolation, Because of the
oppressive^k*oppressive* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.
wrath, Because of such fierce
anger.

Chapter 26

At the beginning of the reign of King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah,
this word came from OD:
"Thus said OD: Stand in the court of the House of
OD, and speak to [the inhabitants of] all the towns of
Judah, who are coming to worship in the House of OD, all
the words that I command you to speak to them. Do not omit anything.
Perhaps they will listen and turn back, each from their own evil way,
that I may renounce the punishment I am planning to bring upon them for
their wicked acts.
"Say to them: Thus said OD: If you do not obey Me,
abiding by the Teaching that I have set before you,
heeding the words of My servants the prophets whom I have been sending to
you persistently—but you have not heeded—
then I will make this House like Shiloh, and I will make this city a
curse^a*a curse*
Cf. note at 24.9. for all the nations of earth."
The priests and prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these
words in the House of OD.
And when Jeremiah finished speaking all that OD had
commanded him to speak to all the people, the priests and the prophets
and all the people seized him, shouting, "You shall die!
How dare you prophesy in the name of OD that this House
shall become like Shiloh and this city be made desolate, without
inhabitants?" And all the people crowded about Jeremiah in the House of
OD.
When the officials of Judah heard about this, they went up from the
king's palace to the House of OD and held a session at
the entrance of the New Gate of the House of^b*the House of* So many mss. and
ancient versions; other mss. and the editions omit these words.
OD.

The priests and prophets said to the officials and to all the people, "This man deserves the death penalty, for he has prophesied against this city, as you yourselves have heard."

Jeremiah said to the officials and to all the people, "It was G>OD who sent me to prophesy against this House and this city all the words you heard.

Therefore mend your ways and your acts, and heed the E>TERNAL your God, that G>OD may renounce the punishment that has been decreed for you.

As for me, I am in your hands: do to me what seems good and right to you. But know that if you put me to death, you and this city and its inhabitants will be guilty of shedding an innocent's blood. For in truth G>OD has sent me to you, to speak all these words to you."

Then the officials and all the people said to the priests and prophets, "This man does not deserve the death penalty, for he spoke to us in the name of the E>TERNAL our God."

And some of the elders of the land arose and said to the entire assemblage of the people,

"Micah the Morashtite, who prophesied in the days of King Hezekiah of Judah, said to all the people of Judah: 'Thus said G>OD of Hosts:
Zion shall be plowed as a field,
Jerusalem shall become
heaps of ruins
And the Temple
Mount a shrine in the woods.'
^c
Zion shall ... shrine in the woods
 Cf. Mic. 3.12.

Did King Hezekiah of Judah, and all Judah, put him to death? Did he not rather fear G>OD and implore G>OD, so that G>OD renounced the punishment He had decreed against them? We are about to do great injury to ourselves!"

There was also a man prophesying in the name of G>OD, Uriah son of Shemaiah from Kiriath-jearim, who prophesied against this city and this land the same things as Jeremiah.

King Jehoiakim and all his warriors and all the officials heard about his address, and the king wanted to put him to death. Uriah heard of this and fled in fear, and came to Egypt.

But King Jehoiakim sent agents—Elnathan son of Achbor and several men under him—to Egypt.

They took Uriah out of Egypt and brought him to King Jehoiakim, who had him put to the sword and his body thrown into the burial place of the common people.

However, Ahikam son of Shaphan protected Jeremiah, so that he was not handed over to the people for execution.

Chapter 27

At the beginning of the reign of King Jehoiakim^a
^{Jehoiakim} Emendation yields "Zedekiah"; so a few mss. and Syriac; cf. vv. 3 and 12.

son of Josiah of Judah, this word came to Jeremiah from G>OD:

Thus said G>OD to me: Make for yourself thongs and bars of a yoke, and put them on your neck.

And send them^b
^{And send them} Emendation yields "And send," i.e., a message.

to the king of Edom, the king of Moab, the king of the Ammonites, the king of Tyre, and the king of Sidon, by envoys who have come to King Zedekiah of Judah in Jerusalem;

and give them this charge to their masters: Thus said G>OD of Hosts, the God of Israel: Say this to your masters:

"It is I who made the earth, and the humans and animals that are on the earth, by My great might and My outstretched arm; and I give it to whomever I deem proper.

I herewith deliver all these lands to My servant, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon; I even give him the wild beasts to serve him.

All nations shall serve him, his son and his grandson—until the turn of his own land comes, when many nations and great kings shall subjugate him.

The nation or kingdom that does not serve him—King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon—and does not put its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that nation I will visit—declares GOD—with sword, famine, and pestilence, until I have destroyed it by his hands.

As for you, give no heed to your prophets, augurs, dreamers,^{class="footnote-marker">c}*class="footnote">dreamers Lit. "dreams."* diviners, and sorcerers, who say to you, 'Do not serve the king of Babylon.'

For they prophesy falsely to you—with the result that you shall be banished from your land; I will drive you out and you shall perish.

But the nation that puts its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serves him, will be left by Me on its own soil—declares GOD—to till it and dwell on it."

I also spoke to King Zedekiah of Judah in just the same way: "Put your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon; serve him and his people, and live!

Otherwise you will die together with your people, by sword, famine, and pestilence, as GOD has decreed against any nation that does not serve the king of Babylon.

Give no heed to the words of the prophets who say to you, 'Do not serve the king of Babylon,' for they prophesy falsely to you.

I have not sent them—declares GOD—and they prophesy falsely in My name, with the result that I will drive you out and you shall perish, together with the prophets who prophesy to you."

And to the priests and to all that people I said: "Thus said GOD: Give no heed to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you, 'The vessels of the House of GOD shall shortly be brought back from Babylon,' for they prophesy falsely to you. Give them no heed. Serve the king of Babylon, and live! Otherwise this city shall become a ruin.

If they are really prophets and the word of GOD is with them, let them intercede with GOD of Hosts not to let the vessels remaining in the House of GOD, in the royal palace of Judah, and in Jerusalem, go to Babylon!

"For thus said GOD of Hosts concerning the columns, the tank,^{class="footnote-marker">d}*class="footnote">tank Lit. "sea"; cf. 1 Kings 7.23ff.* the stands, and the rest of the vessels remaining in this city,

which King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon did not take when he exiled King Jeconiah son of Jehoiakim of Judah, from Jerusalem to Babylon, with all the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem;

for thus said GOD of Hosts, the God of Israel, concerning the vessels remaining in the House of GOD, in the royal palace of Judah, and in Jerusalem:

They shall be brought to Babylon, and there they shall remain, until I take note of them—declares GOD of Hosts—and bring them up and restore them to this place."

Chapter 28

That year, early in the reign of King Zedekiah of Judah, in the fifth month of the fourth year, the prophet Hananiah son of Azzur, who was from

Gibeon, spoke to me in the House of GOD, in the presence of the priests and all the people. He said:
 "Thus said GOD of Hosts, the God of Israel: I hereby break the yoke of the king of Babylon.
 In two years, I will restore to this place all the vessels of the House of GOD that King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon took from this place and brought to Babylon.
 And I will bring back to this place King Jeconiah son of Jehoiakim of Judah, and all the Judean exiles who went to Babylon—declares GOD. Yes, I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon."
 Then the prophet Jeremiah answered the prophet Hananiah in the presence of the priests and of all the people who were standing in the House of GOD.
 The prophet Jeremiah said: "Amen! May GOD do so! May GOD fulfill what you have prophesied and bring back from Babylon to this place the vessels of the House of GOD and all the exiles!
 But just listen to this word that I address to you and to all the people: The prophets who lived before you and me from ancient times prophesied war, disaster, and pestilence against many lands and great kingdoms. So if a prophet prophesies good fortune, then only when the word of the prophet comes true can it be known that GOD really sent him."
 But the prophet Hananiah removed the bar from the neck of the prophet Jeremiah, and broke it;
 and Hananiah said in the presence of all the people, "Thus said GOD: So will I break the yoke of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon from off the necks of all the nations, in two years." And the prophet Jeremiah went on his way.
 After the prophet Hananiah had broken the bar from off the neck of the prophet Jeremiah, the word of GOD came to Jeremiah:
 "Go say to Hananiah: Thus said GOD: You broke bars of wood, but you shall^a you shall **Septuagint reads "I will."** make bars of iron instead.
 For thus said GOD of Hosts, the God of Israel: I have put an iron yoke upon the necks of all those nations, that they may serve King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon—and serve him they shall! I have even given the wild beasts to him."
 And the prophet Jeremiah said to the prophet Hananiah, "Listen, Hananiah! GOD did not send you, and you have given this people lying assurances.
 Assuredly, thus said GOD: I am going to banish you from off the earth. This year you shall die, for you have urged disloyalty to GOD."
 And the prophet Hananiah died that year, in the seventh month.

Chapter 29

This is the text of the letter that the prophet Jeremiah sent from Jerusalem to the priests, the prophets, the rest of the elders of the exile community, and to all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had exiled from Jerusalem to Babylon—
 after King Jeconiah, the queen mother, the eunuchs, the officials of Judah and Jerusalem, and the artisans and smiths had left Jerusalem.
 [The letter was sent] through Elasah son of Shaphan and Gemariah son of Hilkiah, whom King Zedekiah of Judah had dispatched to Babylon, to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon.
 Thus said GOD of Hosts, the God of Israel, to the whole community that I exiled from Jerusalem to Babylon:

Build houses and live in them, plant gardens and eat their fruit. You^a*You*
**I.e., the men in the community.*</i>* should take wives and beget sons and daughters; and you should take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters. Multiply there, do not decrease.

And seek the welfare of the city to which I have exiled you and pray to GOD in its behalf; for in its prosperity you shall prosper.

For thus said GOD of Hosts, the God of Israel: Let not the prophets and diviners in your midst deceive you, and pay no heed to the dreams they^b*they*
**Heb. "you."*</i>* dream.

For they prophesy to you in My name falsely; I did not send them—declares GOD.

For thus said GOD: When Babylon's seventy years are over, I will take note of you, and I will fulfill to you My promise of favor—to bring you back to this place.

For I am mindful of the plans I have made concerning you—declares GOD—plans for your welfare, not for disaster, to give you a hopeful future.

When you call Me, and come and pray to Me, I will give heed to you. You will search for Me and find Me, if only you seek Me wholeheartedly. I will be at hand for you—declares GOD—and I will restore your fortunes. And I will gather you from all the nations and from all the places to which I have banished you—declares GOD—and I will bring you back to the place from which I have exiled you.

But you say, "GOD has raised up prophets for us in Babylon."^c*This*
**verse is continued in vv. 20ff.*</i>*

Thus said GOD concerning the king who sits on the throne of David, and concerning all the people who dwell in this city, your kinsfolk who did not go out with you into exile—

thus said GOD of Hosts: I am going to let loose sword, famine, and pestilence against them and I will treat them as loathsome figs, so bad that they cannot be eaten.^d*loathsome figs ... cannot be eaten*
**Cf. chapter 24.*</i>*

I will pursue them with the sword, with famine, and with pestilence; and I will make them a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth, an execration^e*an*
**I.e., a standard by which people execrate; cf. 42.18; 44.12.*</i>* and an object of horror and hissing^f*hissing*
**Cf. note at 18.16.*</i>* and scorn among all the nations to which I shall banish them, because they did not heed My words—declares GOD—when I persistently sent to them My servants, the prophets, and they^g*they*
**Heb. "you."*</i>* did not heed—declares GOD.

But you, the whole exile community that I banished from Jerusalem to Babylon, hear the word of GOD!

Thus said GOD of Hosts, the God of Israel, concerning Ahab son of Kolaiah and Zedekiah son of Maaseiah, who prophesy falsely to you in My name: I am going to deliver them into the hands of King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, and he shall put them to death before your eyes.

And the whole community of Judah in Babylonia shall use a curse derived from their fate: "May God make you like Zedekiah and Ahab, whom the king of Babylon consigned to the flames!"—

because they did vile things in Israel, committing adultery with the wives of their fellows and speaking in My name false words that I had not commanded them. I am the One who knows and bears witness—declares GOD.

Concerning Shemaiah the Nehelamite you^h*^h<i class="footnote">you I.e., Jeremiah.</i>* shall say:

Thus said GOD of Hosts, the God of Israel: Because you sent letters in your own name to all the people in Jerusalem, to Zephaniah son of Maaseiah and to the rest of the priests, as follows, "GOD appointed you priest in place of the priest Jehoiada, to exercise authorityⁱ*ⁱ<i class="footnote">to exercise authority Lit. "that there might be officials."</i>* in the House of GOD over every maniac who wants to play the prophet, to put them into the stocks^j*^j<i class="footnote">stocks Meaning of Heb. uncertain.</i>* and into the pillory.^k*^k<i class="footnote">pillory Meaning of Heb. uncertain.</i>*

Now why have you not rebuked Jeremiah the Anathothite, who plays the prophet among you?

For he has actually sent a message to us in Babylon to this effect: It will be a long time. Build houses and live in them, plant gardens and enjoy their fruit."

When the priest Zephaniah read this letter in the hearing of the prophet Jeremiah,

the word of GOD came to Jeremiah:

Send a message to the entire exile community: "Thus said

GOD concerning Shemaiah the Nehelamite: Because Shemaiah prophesied to you, though I did not send him, and made you false promises,

assuredly, thus said GOD: I am going to punish Shemaiah the Nehelamite and his offspring. There shall be no one of his line dwelling among this people or seeing the good things I am going to do for My people—declares GOD—for he has urged disloyalty toward GOD."

Chapter 30

The word that came to Jeremiah from GOD:

Thus said the ETERNAL, the God of Israel: Write down in a scroll all the words that I have spoken to you.

For days are coming—declares GOD—when I will restore the fortunes of My people Israel and Judah, said GOD; and I will bring them back to the land that I gave their ancestors, and they shall possess it.

And these are the words that GOD spoke concerning Israel and Judah:

>Thus said

GOD:
>We have heard cries of panic,
>Terror without relief.

>Ask and see:
>Surely males do not bear young!
>Why then do I see every man
>With his hands on his loins
>Like a woman in labor?
>Why have all faces turned pale?

>Ah, that day is awesome;
>There is none like it!

class="poetry indentAll">It is a time of trouble for Jacob,
But he shall be delivered from it.

In that day—declares GOD of Hosts—I will break the yoke from off your neck and I will rip off your bonds. Strangers shall no longer make slaves of them; instead, they shall serve the ETERNAL their God and David, the king whom I will raise up for them.

But you,
Have no fear, My servant Jacob
—declares GOD—
Be not dismayed, O Israel!
I will deliver you from far away,
Your folk from their land of captivity.
And Jacob shall again have calm
And quiet with none to trouble him;

For I am with you to deliver you
—declares GOD.
I will make an end of all the nations
Among which I have dispersed you;
But I will not make an end of you!
I will not leave you unpunished,
But will chastise you in measure.

For thus said GOD:
Your injury is incurable,
Your wound severe;

No one pleads for the healing of your sickness,^a<i class="footnote">No one pleads for the healing of your sickness Meaning of Heb. uncertain.</i>
There is no remedy, no recovery for you.

All your lovers have forgotten you,
They do not seek you out;
For I have struck you as an enemy strikes,
With cruel chastisement,
Because your iniquity was so great
And your sins so many.

Why cry out over your injury,
That your wound is incurable?
I did these things to you
Because your iniquity was so great
And your sins so many.

Assuredly,
All who wanted to devour you shall be devoured,
And every one of your foes shall go into captivity;
Those who despoiled you shall be despoiled,
And all who pillaged you I will give up to pillage.

But I will bring healing to you
And cure you of your wounds
—declares GOD.
Though they called you "Outcast,
That Zion whom no one seeks out,"

Thus said
G<small>OD</small>:
I will restore the
fortunes of Jacob's tents
And
have compassion upon his dwellings.
<span class="poetry
indentAll">The city shall be rebuilt on its mound,<sup
class="footnote-marker">b</sup><i class="footnote">on its mound
I.e., on the mound of ruins left after its previous destruction.</i>

And the fortress in its proper
place.
From them shall issue
thanksgiving
And the sound of
dancers.
I will multiply
them,
And they shall not be
few;
I will make them
honored,
And they shall not be
humbled.
His children shall be as of
old,
And his community shall be
established by My grace;
And I
will deal with all his oppressors.
His chieftain shall be one of his
own,
His ruler shall come from
his midst;
I will bring him
near, that he may approach Me
<span class="poetry
indentAllDouble">declares G<small>OD</small>—
<span
class="poetry indentAll">For who would otherwise dare approach Me?
You shall be My people,
<span
class="poetry indentAll">And I will be your God.
Lo, G<small>OD</small>'s storm goes
forth in fury,
A raging
tempest;
It shall whirl down
upon the head of the wicked.
The anger of G<small>OD</small>
shall not turn back
Till it has
fulfilled and completed God's purposes.
<span class="poetry
indentAll">In the days to come
<span class="poetry
indentAll">You shall perceive it.

Chapter 31

Thus said
G<small>OD</small>:
The people escaped
from the sword,
Found favor in
the wilderness;
When Israel was
marching homeward
 G<small>OD</small> was
revealed^b<i
class="footnote">revealed Heb. adds "to me"; emendation yields "to
him."</i> long ago.
Eternal love I
conceived for you then;
<span class="poetry
indentAll">Therefore I continue My grace to you.
I will build you firmly
again,
O Maiden
Israel!
Again you shall take up
your hand-drums^c<i
class="footnote">you shall take up your hand-drums See note at

Exod. 15.20.

And go forth to the rhythm of the dancers.

Again you shall plant vineyards

On the hills of Samaria;

You

^d

You Heb. "They." shall plant and live to enjoy the fruit.

For the day is coming when watchmen

Shall proclaim on the heights of Ephraim:

Come, let us go up to Zion,

To the ETERNAL our God!

For thus said

GOD:

Cry out in joy for Jacob,

Shout at the crossroads

^e

crossroads Lit. "head." of the nations!

Sing aloud in praise, and say:

Save, O

ETERNAL One, Your people,

^f

Save, O ETERNAL One, Your people Emendation yields "GOD has saved this people."

The remnant of Israel.

I will bring them in from the northland,

Gather them from the ends of the earth—

The blind and the lame among them,

Those with child and those in labor—

In a vast throng they shall return here.

They shall come with weeping,

And with compassion

^g

compassion For this meaning, cf. Zech. 12.10.

will I guide them.

I will lead them to streams of water,

By a level road where they will not stumble.

For I am ever a Father

^h

Father See note at [Jeremiah 3:4](Jeremiah.3.4) 3.4

to Israel,

Ephraim is My first-born.

Hear the word of

GOD, O nations,

And tell it in the isles afar.

Say:

The One who scattered Israel will gather them,

And will guard them as a shepherd his flock.

For

GOD will ransom Jacob,

Redeem him from one too strong for him.

They shall come and shout on the heights of Zion,

Radiant over GOD's bounty—

Over new grain and wine and oil,

And over sheep and cattle.

They shall fare like a watered garden,

They shall never languish again.

Then shall maidens dance gaily,

Young men and old

alike.

I will turn their mourning to joy,

I will comfort them and cheer them in their grief.

I will give the priests their fill of fatness,

And My people shall enjoy My full bounty

—declares GOD.

Thus said

GOD:
A cry is heard in Ramah
ⁱ*in Ramah* Or "on a height."
Wailing, bitter weeping—
Rachel weeping for her children.
She refuses to be comforted
For her children, who are gone.

Thus said

GOD:
Restrain your voice from weeping,
Your eyes from shedding tears;
For there is a reward for your labor

—declares GOD:
They shall return from the enemy's land.

And there is hope for your future

—declares GOD:
Your children shall return to their country.

I can hear Ephraim lamenting:

"You have chastised me, and I am chastised

Like a calf that has not been broken.

Receive me back, let me return,

For You, O ETERNAL One, are my God.

Now that I have turned back, I am filled with remorse;

Now that I am made aware, I strike my thigh.
^j*strike my thigh* A gesture of self-reproach.

I am ashamed and humiliated,

For I bear the disgrace of my youth."

Truly, Ephraim is a dear son to Me,

A child that is dandled!

Whenever I have turned
^k*turned* Lit. "spoken." against him,

My thoughts would dwell on him still.

That is why My heart yearns for him;

I will receive him back in love

—declares GOD.

Erect markers,

Set up signposts;
^l*signposts* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

Keep in mind the highway,

The road that you traveled.

Return, Maiden Israel!

Return to these towns of yours!

How long will you waver,

O rebellious daughter?

(For GOD has created

something new on earth:
A woman courts^{class="footnote-marker">m}
courts Meaning of Heb. uncertain.</i> a man.)
 Thus said GOD of Hosts, the God of Israel: They shall again say this in the land of Judah and in its towns, when I restore their fortunes:

 GOD bless you,
Abode of righteousness,
O holy mountain!"
 Judah and all its towns alike shall be inhabited by the farmers and such as move about^{class="footnote-marker">n}
such as move about Lit. "they shall travel."</i> with the flocks.
 For I will give the thirsty abundant drink, and satisfy all who languish. At this I awoke and looked about, and my sleep^{class="footnote-marker">o}
my sleep I.e., the vision in the preceding verses.</i> had been pleasant to me.
 See, a time is coming—declares GOD—when I will sow the House of Israel and the House of Judah with seed of people and seed of cattle;
 and just as I was watchful over them to uproot and to pull down, to overthrow and to destroy and to bring disaster, so I will be watchful over them to build and to plant—declares GOD.
 In those days, they shall no longer say, "Parents have eaten sour grapes and children's teeth are blunted."^{class="footnote-marker">p}
blunted In contrast to others "set on edge."</i> But every one shall die for their own sins: whosoever eats sour grapes, their teeth shall be blunted.
 See, a time is coming—declares GOD—when I will make a new covenant with the House of Israel and the House of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors, when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, a covenant that they broke, though I espoused^{class="footnote-marker">q}
espoused Meaning of Heb. uncertain; compare 3.14.</i> them—declares GOD.
 But such is the covenant I will make with the House of Israel after these days—declares GOD: I will put My Teaching into their inmost being and inscribe it upon their hearts. Then I will be their God, and they shall be My people.
 No longer will they need to teach one another and say to one another, "Heed GOD"; for all of them, from the least of them to the greatest, shall heed Me—declares GOD.
For I will forgive their iniquities,
And remember their sins no more.
Thus said
 GOD,
Who established the sun for light by day,
The laws of moon and stars for light by night,
Who stirs up the sea into roaring waves,
Whose name is GOD of Hosts:
If these laws should ever be annulled by Me
—declares
 GOD—
Only then would the offspring of Israel cease
To be a nation before Me for all time.
 Thus said GOD: If the heavens above could be measured, and the foundations of the earth below could be fathomed, only then would I

reject all the offspring of Israel for all that they have done—declares GOD.

See, a time is coming—declares GOD—when the city shall be rebuilt for GOD from the Tower of Hananel to the Corner Gate;

and the measuring line shall go straight out to the Gareb Hill, and then turn toward Goah.

And the entire Valley of the Corpses and Ashes, and all the fields as far as the Wadi Kidron, and the corner of the Horse Gate on the east, shall be holy to GOD. They shall never again be uprooted or overthrown.

Chapter 32

The word that came to Jeremiah from GOD in the tenth year of King Zedekiah of Judah, which was the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar.

At that time the army of the king of Babylon was besieging Jerusalem, and the prophet Jeremiah was confined in the prison compound attached to the palace of the king of Judah.

For King Zedekiah of Judah had confined him, saying, "How dare you prophesy: 'Thus said GOD: I am delivering this city into the hands of the king of Babylon, and he shall capture it.

And King Zedekiah of Judah shall not escape from the Chaldeans; he shall be delivered into the hands of the king of Babylon, and he shall speak to him face to face and see him in person.^a<i class="footnote">and he shall speak to him face to face and see him in person Lit. "and his mouth shall speak with his mouth, and his eyes shall see his eyes."</i>

And Zedekiah shall be brought to Babylon, there to remain until I take note of him—declares GOD. When you wage war against the Chaldeans, you shall not be successful.'"

Jeremiah said: The word of GOD came to me:

Hanamel, the son of your uncle Shallum, will come to you and say, "Buy my land in Anathoth, for you are next in succession to redeem it by purchase."^b<i class="footnote">for you are next in succession to redeem it by purchase Lit. "for yours is the procedure of redemption by purchase."</i>

And just as GOD had said, my cousin Hanamel came to me in the prison compound and said to me, "Please buy my land in Anathoth, in the territory of Benjamin; for the right of succession is yours, and you have the duty of redemption. Buy it." Then I knew that it was indeed the word of GOD.

So I bought the land in Anathoth from my cousin Hanamel. I weighed out the money to him, seventeen shekels of silver.

I wrote a deed, sealed it, and had it witnessed; and I weighed out the silver on a balance.

I took the deed of purchase, the sealed text and the open one according to rule and law,^c<i class="footnote">according to rule and law Force of Heb. uncertain.</i>

and gave the deed to Baruch son of Neriah son of Mahseiah in the presence of my kinsman Hanamel, of the witnesses who were named^d<i class="footnote">who were named With many mss. and ancient versions; so ancient Near Eastern practice. Other mss. and the editions read "who wrote" (i.e., signed their names).</i> in the deed, and all the Judeans who were sitting in the prison compound.

In their presence I charged Baruch as follows:

Thus said GOD of Hosts, the God of Israel: "Take these documents, this deed of purchase, the sealed text and the open one, and put them into an earthen jar, so that they may last a long time."

For thus said GOD of Hosts, the God of Israel: "Houses, fields, and vineyards shall again be purchased in this land."

But after I had given the deed to Baruch son of Neriah, I prayed to GOD:

"Ah, my Sovereign GOD! You made heaven and earth with Your great might and outstretched arm. Nothing is too wondrous for You! You show kindness to the thousandth generation, but visit the guilt of the parents upon their children after them. O great and mighty God whose name is GOD of Hosts, wondrous in purpose and mighty in deed, whose eyes observe all the ways of mortals, so as to repay each one according to their ways, and with the proper fruit of their deeds!

You displayed signs and marvels in the land of Egypt with lasting effect,^e*with lasting effect* Lit. "to this day." and won renown in Israel and among humankind to this very day.

You freed Your people Israel from the land of Egypt with signs and marvels, with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, and with great terror.

You gave them this land that You had sworn to their fathers to give them, a land flowing with milk and honey,

and they came and took possession of it. But they did not listen to You or follow Your Teaching; they did nothing of what You commanded them to do. Therefore you have caused all this misfortune to befall them.

Here are the siege mounds, raised against the city to storm it; and the city, because of sword and famine and pestilence, is at the mercy of the Chaldeans who are attacking it. What You threatened has come to pass—as You see.

Yet You, my Sovereign GOD, said to me: Buy the land for money and call in witnesses—when the city is at the mercy of the Chaldeans!"

Then the word of GOD came to Jeremiah:

Behold I am GOD, the God of all flesh. Is anything too wondrous for Me?

Assuredly, thus said GOD: I am delivering this city into the hands of the Chaldeans and of King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, and he shall capture it.

And the Chaldeans who have been attacking this city shall come and set this city on fire and burn it down—with the houses on whose roofs they made offerings to Baal and poured out libations to other gods, so as to vex Me.

For the people of Israel and Judah have done nothing but evil in My sight since their youth; the people of Israel have done nothing but vex Me by their conduct—declares GOD.

This city has aroused My anger and My wrath from the day it was built until this day; so that it must be removed from My sight because of all the wickedness of the people of Israel and Judah who have so acted as to vex Me—they, their kings, their officials, their priests and prophets, and the citizenry of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

They turned their backs to Me, not their faces; though I have taught them persistently, they do not give heed or accept rebuke.

They placed their abominations in the House that bears My name and defiled it;

and they built the shrines of Baal that are in the Valley of Ben-hinnom, where they offered up their sons and daughters to Molech—when I had never

commanded, or even thought [of commanding], that they should do such an abominable thing, and so bring guilt on Judah.

But now, assuredly, thus said the ETERNAL, the God of Israel, concerning this city of which you say, "It is being delivered into the hands of the king of Babylon through the sword, through famine, and through pestilence":

See, I will gather them from all the lands to which I have banished them in My anger and wrath, and in great rage; and I will bring them back to this place and let them dwell secure.

They shall be My people, and I will be their God.

I will give them a single heart and a single nature to revere Me for all time, and it shall be well with them and their children after them.

And I will make an everlasting covenant with them that I will not turn away from them and that I will treat them graciously; and I will put into their hearts reverence for Me, so that they do not turn away from Me.

I will delight in treating them graciously, and I will plant them in this land faithfully, with all My heart and soul.

For thus said GOD: As I have brought this terrible disaster upon this people, so I am going to bring upon them the vast good fortune that I have promised for them.

And fields shall again be purchased in this land of which you say, "It is a desolation, without humans or animals; it is delivered into the hands of the Chaldeans."

Fields shall be purchased, and deeds written and sealed, and witnesses called in the land of Benjamin and in the environs of Jerusalem, and in the towns of Judah; the towns of the hill country, the towns of the Shephelah, and the towns of the Negeb. For I will restore their fortunes—declares GOD.

Chapter 33

The word of GOD came to Jeremiah a second time, while he was still confined in the prison compound, as follows:

Thus said GOD who is planning it,
GOD

who is shaping it to bring it about,
Whose name is GOD:

Call to Me, and I will answer you,
And I will tell you wondrous things,
Secrets you have not known.

For thus said the ETERNAL, the God of Israel, concerning the houses of this city and the palaces of the kings of Judah that were torn down for [defense] against the siege mounds and against the sword, and were filled by those who went to fight the Chaldeans^a*for [defense] against the siege mounds ... fight the Chaldeans* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.—with the corpses of those whom I struck down in My anger and rage, hiding My face from this city because of all their wickedness: I am going to bring her relief and healing. I will heal them and reveal to them abundance^b*abundance* Meaning of Heb. uncertain. of true favor.

And I will restore the fortunes of Judah and Israel, and I will rebuild them as of old.

And I will purge them of all the sins that they committed against Me, and I will pardon all the sins that they committed against Me, by which they rebelled against Me.

And she shall gain through Me renown, joy, fame, and glory above all the nations on earth, when they hear of all the good fortune I provide for them.^c*them I.e., Judah and Israel.</i> They will thrill and quiver because of all the good fortune and all the prosperity that I provide for her. Thus said G^{OD}: Again there shall be heard in this place, which you say is ruined, without humans or animals—in the towns of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem that are desolate, without humans, without inhabitants, without animals—the sound of mirth and gladness, the voice of bridegroom and bride, the voice of those who cry, “Give thanks to G^{OD} of Hosts, for G^{OD}—whose steadfast love is eternal—is good!” as they bring thanksgiving offerings to the House of G^{OD}. For I will restore the fortunes of the land as of old—said G^{OD}. Thus said G^{OD} of Hosts: In this ruined place, without humans or animals, and in all its towns, there shall again be a pasture for shepherds, where they can rest their flocks. In the towns of the hill country, in the towns of the Shephelah, and in the towns of the Negeb, in the land of Benjamin and in the environs of Jerusalem and in the towns of Judah, sheep shall pass again under the hands of one who counts them—said G^{OD}. See, days are coming—declares G^{OD}—when I will fulfill the promise that I made concerning the House of Israel and the House of Judah. In those days and at that time, I will raise up a true branch of David’s line, and he shall do what is just and right in the land. In those days Judah shall be delivered and Jerusalem shall dwell secure. And this is what it shall be called: “G^{OD} is our Vindicator.”^d*G^{OD} is our Vindicator See note at 23.6; here, it is the city that will bear this name.</i> For thus said G^{OD}: There shall never be an end to those of David’s line who sit upon the throne of the House of Israel. Nor shall there ever be an end to the line of the levitical priests before Me, of those who present burnt offerings and turn the grain offering to smoke and perform sacrifices. The word of G^{OD} came to Jeremiah: Thus said G^{OD}: If you could break My covenant with the day and My covenant with the night, so that day and night should not come at their proper time, only then could My covenant with My servant David be broken—so that he would not have a descendant reigning upon his throne—or with My ministrants, the levitical priests. Like the host of heaven that cannot be counted, and the sand of the sea that cannot be measured, so will I multiply the offspring of My servant David, and of the Levites who minister to Me. The word of G^{OD} came to Jeremiah: You see what this people said: “The two families that G^{OD} chose have now been rejected.” Thus they despise My people, and regard them as no longer a nation.^e*and regard them as no longer a nation Meaning of Heb. uncertain.</i> Thus said G^{OD}: As surely as I have established My covenant with day and night—the laws of heaven and earth—so I will never reject the offspring of Jacob and My servant David; I will never fail to take from his offspring rulers for the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Indeed, I will restore their fortunes and take them back in love.***

The word that came to Jeremiah from GOD, when King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon and all his army, and all the kingdoms of the earth and all the peoples under his sway, were waging war against Jerusalem and all its towns:

Thus said the ETERNAL, the God of Israel: Go speak to King Zedekiah of Judah, and say to him: "Thus said GOD: I am going to deliver this city into the hands of the king of Babylon, and he will destroy it by fire.

And you will not escape from him; you will be captured and handed over to him. And you will see the king of Babylon face to face and speak to him in person;^a*And you will see the king of Babylon face to face and speak to him in personFor the idiom see note at 32.4.</i> and you will be brought to Babylon.*

But hear the word of GOD, O King Zedekiah of Judah! Thus said GOD concerning you: You will not die by the sword. You will die a peaceful death; and as incense^b*incenseLit. "burnings."</i> was burned for your ancestors, the earlier kings who preceded you, so they will burn incense^c*incenseSee preceding note.</i> for you, and they will lament for you 'Ah, lord!' For I Myself have made the promise—declares GOD."**

The prophet Jeremiah spoke all these words to King Zedekiah of Judah in Jerusalem,

when the army of the king of Babylon was waging war against Jerusalem and against the remaining towns of Judah—against Lachish and Azekah, for they were the only fortified towns of Judah that were left.

The word that came to Jeremiah from GOD after King Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people in Jerusalem to proclaim a release^d*releaseIn contrast to others "liberty."</i> among them—*

that everyone should set free their Hebrew slaves, both male and female, and that no one should keep their fellow Judean enslaved.

Everyone, officials and people, who had entered into the covenant agreed to set their male and female slaves free and not keep them enslaved any longer; they complied and let them go.

But afterward they turned about and brought back the men and women they had set free, and forced them into slavery again.

Then it was that the word of GOD came to Jeremiah from GOD:

Thus said the ETERNAL, the God of Israel: I made a covenant with your ancestors when I brought them out of the land of Egypt, the house of bondage, saying:

"In the seventh year^e*In the seventh yearOf servitude. Lit. "After a period of seven years"; cf. Deut. 14.28; 15.1.</i> each of you must let go any fellow Hebrew who may be sold^f*who may be soldOr "who sell themselves."</i> to you; when they have served you six years, you must set them free." But your ancestors would not obey Me or give ear.**

Lately you turned about and did what is proper in My sight, and all of you proclaimed a release to your compatriots; and you made a covenant accordingly before Me in the House that bears My name.

But now you have turned back and have profaned My name; each of you has brought back the men and women whom you had given their freedom, and forced them to be your slaves again.

Assuredly, thus said GOD: You would not obey Me and proclaim a release, each to your kin and neighbor. Lo! I proclaim your release—declares GOD—to the sword, to pestilence, and to famine; and I will make you a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth. I will make the parties who violated My covenant, who did not fulfill the terms of the covenant that they made before Me, [like] the calf that they cut in two so as to pass between the halves:^{^g}*<i class="footnote">the calf ... the halves Cf. Gen. 15.9-10, 17-21.</i>*

The officers of Judah and Jerusalem, the officials, the priests, and all the people of the land who passed between the halves of the calf shall be handed over to their enemies, to those who seek to kill them. Their carcasses shall become food for the birds of the sky and the beasts of the earth.

I will hand over King Zedekiah of Judah and his officers to their enemies, who seek to kill them—to the army of the king of Babylon that has withdrawn from you.

I hereby give the command—declares GOD—by which I will bring them back against this city. They shall attack it and capture it, and burn it down. I will make the towns of Judah a desolation, without inhabitant.

Chapter 35

The word that came to Jeremiah from GOD in the days of King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah:

Go to the house of the Rechabites and speak to them, and bring them to the House of GOD, to one of the chambers, and give them wine to drink.

So I took Jaazaniah son of Jeremiah son of Habazziniah, and his brothers, all his sons, and all the men in the household of the Rechabites; and I brought them to the House of GOD, to the chamber of the sons of Hanan son of Igdaliah, the agent of God, which is next to the chamber of the officials and above the chamber of Maaseiah son of Shallum, the guardian of the threshold.

I set bowls full of wine and cups before the Rechabites, and said to them, "Have some wine."

They replied, "We will not drink wine, for our ancestor, Jonadab son of Rechab, commanded us: 'You shall never drink wine, either you or your children.

Nor shall you build houses or sow fields^{^a}*<i class="footnote">fields Lit. "seed."</i>* or plant vineyards, nor shall you own such things; but you shall live in tents all your days, so that you may live long upon the land where you sojourn.'

And we have obeyed our ancestor Jonadab son of Rechab in all that he commanded us: we never drink wine, neither we nor our wives nor our sons and daughters.

Nor do we build houses to live in, and we do not own vineyards or fields for sowing;

but we live in tents. We have obeyed and done all that our ancestor Jonadab commanded us.

But when King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon invaded the country, we said, 'Come, let us go into Jerusalem because of the army of the Chaldeans and the army of Aram.' And so we are living in Jerusalem."

Then the word of GOD came to Jeremiah:

Thus said GOD of Hosts, the God of Israel: Go say to the citizenry of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: "You can learn a lesson [here] about obeying My commands—declares GOD.

The commands of Jonadab son of Rechab have been fulfilled: he charged his children not to drink wine, and to this day they have not drunk, in obedience to the charge of their ancestor. But I spoke to you persistently, and you did not listen to Me.

I persistently sent you all My servants, the prophets, to say: 'Turn back, every one of you, from your wicked ways and mend your deeds; do not follow other gods or serve them. Then you may remain on the land that I gave to you and your ancestors.' But you did not give ear or listen to Me.

The family of Jonadab son of Rechab have indeed fulfilled the charge that their ancestor gave them; but this people has not listened to Me.

Assuredly, thus said the ETERNAL, the God of Hosts, the God of Israel: I am going to bring upon Judah and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the disaster with which I have threatened them; for I spoke to them, but they would not listen; I called to them, but they would not respond."

And to the family of the Rechabites Jeremiah said: "Thus said GOD of Hosts, the God of Israel: Because you have obeyed the charge of your ancestor Jonadab and kept all his commandments, and done all that he enjoined upon you,

assuredly, thus said GOD of Hosts, the God of Israel: There shall never cease to be someone from the line of Jonadab son of Rechab standing before Me."

Chapter 36

In the fourth year of King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah, this word came to Jeremiah from GOD:

Get a scroll and write upon it all the words that I have spoken to you—concerning Israel and Judah and all the nations—from the time I first spoke to you in the days of Josiah to this day.

Perhaps when the House of Judah hear of all the disasters I intend to bring upon them, they will turn back from their wicked ways, and I will pardon their iniquity and their sin.

So Jeremiah called Baruch son of Neriah; and Baruch wrote down in the scroll, at Jeremiah's dictation, all the words that GOD had spoken to him.

Jeremiah instructed Baruch, "I am in hiding;^a***in hiding*** Or "detained." I cannot go to the House of GOD.

But you go and read aloud GOD's words from the scroll that you wrote at my dictation, to all the people in the House of GOD on a fast day; thus you will also be reading them to all the Judeans who come in from the towns.

Perhaps their entreaty will be accepted by GOD, if they turn back from their wicked ways. For great is the anger and wrath with which GOD has threatened this people."

Baruch son of Neriah did just as the prophet Jeremiah had instructed him, about reading GOD's words from the scroll in the House of GOD.

In the ninth month of the fifth year of King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah, all the people in Jerusalem and all the people coming from Judah proclaimed a fast before GOD in Jerusalem.

It was then that Baruch—in the chamber of Gemariah son of Shaphan the scribe, in the upper court, near the new gateway of the House of GOD—read the words of Jeremiah from the scroll to all the people in the House of GOD.

Micaiah son of Gemariah son of Shaphan heard all the words of GOD [read] from the scroll,

and he went down to the king's palace, to the chamber of the scribe. There he found all the officials in session: Elishama the scribe, Delaiah son of Shemaiah, Elnathan son of Achbor, Gemariah son of Shaphan, Zedekiah son of Hananiah, and all the other officials.

And Micaiah told them all that he had heard as Baruch read from the scroll in the hearing of the people.

Then all the officials sent Jehudi son of Nethaniah son of Shelemiah son of Cushi to say to Baruch, "Take that scroll from which you read to the people, and come along!" And Baruch took the scroll and came to them. They said, "Sit down and read it"^b*Sit down and read it* *Change of vocalization yields "Read it again"; cf. Targum and Septuagint.* to us." And Baruch read it to them.

When they heard all these words, they turned to each other in fear; and they said to Baruch, "We must report all this to the king."

And they questioned Baruch further, "Tell us how you wrote down all these words that he spoke."^c*that he spoke* *Force of Heb. uncertain.*

He answered them, "He himself recited all those words to me, and I would write them down in the scroll in ink."

The officials said to Baruch, "Go into hiding, you and Jeremiah. Don't let a soul know where you are!"

And they went to the king in the court, after leaving the scroll in the chamber of the scribe Elishama. And they reported all these matters to the king.

The king sent Jehudi to get the scroll and he fetched it from the chamber of the scribe Elishama. Jehudi read it to the king and to all the officials who were in attendance on the king.

Since it was the ninth month, the king was sitting in the winter house, with a fire burning in the brazier before him.

And every time Jehudi read three or four columns, [the king] would cut it up with a scribe's knife and throw it into the fire in the brazier, until the entire scroll was consumed by the fire in the brazier.

Yet the king and all his courtiers who heard all these words showed no fear and did not tear their garments;

moreover, Elnathan, Delaiah, and Gemariah begged the king not to burn the scroll, but he would not listen to them.

The king ordered Jerahmeel, the king's son, and Seraiah son of Azriel, and Shelemiah son of Abdeel to arrest the scribe Baruch and the prophet Jeremiah. But OD hid them.

The word of OD came to Jeremiah after the king had burned the scroll containing the words that Baruch had written at Jeremiah's dictation:

Get yourself another scroll, and write upon it the same words that were in the first scroll that was burned by King Jehoiakim of Judah.

And concerning King Jehoiakim of Judah you shall say: Thus said

OD: You burned that scroll, saying, "How dare you write in it that the king of Babylon will come and destroy this land and cause human and animal to cease from it?"

Assuredly, thus said OD concerning King Jehoiakim of Judah: He shall not have any of his line sitting on the throne of David; and his own corpse shall be left exposed to the heat by day and the cold by night.

And I will punish him and his offspring and his courtiers for their iniquity; I will bring on them and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem and on all the citizenry of Judah all the disasters of which I have warned them—but they would not listen.

So Jeremiah got another scroll and gave it to the scribe Baruch son of Neriah. And at Jeremiah's dictation, he wrote in it the whole text of the

scroll that King Jehoiakim of Judah had burned; and more of the like was added.

Chapter 37

Zedekiah son of Josiah became king instead of Coniah son of Jehoiakim, for King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon set him up as king over the land of Judah.

Neither he nor his courtiers nor the people of the land gave heed to the words that GOD spoke through the prophet Jeremiah.

Yet King Zedekiah sent Jehucal son of Shelemiah and Zephaniah son of the priest Maaseiah to the prophet Jeremiah, to say, "Please pray on our behalf to the ETERNAL our God."

(Jeremiah could still go in and out among the people, for they had not yet put him in prison.

The army of Pharaoh had set out from Egypt; and when the Chaldeans who were besieging Jerusalem heard the report, they raised the siege of Jerusalem.)

Then the word of GOD came to the prophet Jeremiah:

Thus said the ETERNAL, the God of Israel: Thus shall you say to the king of Judah who sent you to Me to inquire of Me: "The army of Pharaoh, which set out to help you, will return to its own land, to Egypt.

And the Chaldeans will come back and attack this city and they will capture it and destroy it by fire."

Thus said GOD: Do not delude yourselves into thinking, "The Chaldeans will go away from us." They will not.

Even if you defeated the whole army of the Chaldeans that are fighting against you, and only wounded men were left lying in their tents, they would get up and burn this city down!

When the army of the Chaldeans raised the siege of Jerusalem on account of the army of Pharaoh,

Jeremiah was going to leave Jerusalem and go to the territory of Benjamin to share in some property there^a*to share in some property there* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

When he got to the Benjamin Gate, there was a guard officer there named Irijah son of Shelemiah son of Hananiah; and he arrested the prophet Jeremiah, saying, "You are defecting to the Chaldeans!"

Jeremiah answered, "That's a lie! I'm not defecting to the Chaldeans!" But Irijah would not listen to him; he arrested Jeremiah and brought him to the officials.

The officials were furious with Jeremiah; they beat him and put him into prison, in the house of the scribe Jonathan—for it had been made into a jail.

Thus Jeremiah came to the pit and the cells,^b*pit and the cells* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

and Jeremiah remained there a long time. Then King Zedekiah sent for him, and the king questioned him secretly in his palace. He asked, "Is there any word from GOD?" "There is!" Jeremiah answered, and he continued, "You will be delivered into the hands of the king of Babylon."

And Jeremiah said to King Zedekiah, "What wrong have I done to you, to your courtiers, and to this people, that you have put me in jail?

And where are those prophets of yours who prophesied to you that the king of Babylon would never move against you and against this land?

Now, please hear me, O lord king, and grant my plea: Don't send me back to the house of the scribe Jonathan to die there."^c*to die there* Lit. "and let me not die there."

So King Zedekiah gave instructions to lodge Jeremiah in the prison compound and to supply him daily with a loaf of bread from the Bakers' Street—until all the bread in the city was gone. Jeremiah remained in the prison compound.

Chapter 38

Shephatiah son of Mattan, Gedaliah son of Pashhur, Jucal son of Shelemiah, and Pashhur son of Malchiah heard what Jeremiah was saying to all the people:

"Thus said GOD: Whoever remains in this city shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence; but whoever surrenders to the Chaldeans shall live; he shall at least gain his life^a *he shall at least gain his life* Lit. "he shall have his life as booty"; cf. 21.9. *and shall live.*

Thus said GOD: This city shall be delivered into the hands of the king of Babylon's army, and he shall capture it."

Then the officials said to the king, "Let that man be put to death, for he disheartens^b *disheartens* Lit. "weakens the hands of." *the soldiers, and all the people who are left in this city, by speaking such things to them. That man is not seeking the welfare of this people, but their harm!"*

King Zedekiah replied, "He is in your hands; the king cannot oppose you in anything!"

So they took Jeremiah and put him down in the pit of Malchiah, the king's son, which was in the prison compound; they let Jeremiah down by ropes. There was no water in the pit, only mud, and Jeremiah sank into the mud. Ebed-melech the Cushite, a eunuch who was in the king's palace, heard that they had put Jeremiah in the pit. The king was then sitting at the Benjamin Gate;

so Ebed-melech left the king's palace, and spoke to the king:

"O lord king, those men have acted wickedly in all they did to the prophet Jeremiah; they have put him down in the pit, to die there of hunger." For there was no more bread in the city.

Then the king instructed Ebed-melech the Cushite, "Take with you thirty^c *thirty* *One ms. reads "three."* men from here, and pull the prophet Jeremiah up from the pit before he dies."

So Ebed-melech took the men with him, and went to the king's palace, to a place below^d *a place below* *Emendation yields "the wardrobe of."* the treasury. There they got worn cloths and rags, which they let down to Jeremiah in the pit by ropes.

And Ebed-melech the Cushite called to Jeremiah, "Put the worn cloths and rags under your armpits, inside the ropes." Jeremiah did so, and they pulled Jeremiah up by the ropes and got him out of the pit. And Jeremiah remained in the prison compound.

King Zedekiah sent for the prophet Jeremiah, and had him brought to him at the third entrance of the House of GOD. And the king said to Jeremiah, "I want to ask you something; don't conceal anything from me."

Jeremiah answered the king, "If I tell you, you'll surely kill me; and if I give you advice, you won't listen to me."

Thereupon King Zedekiah secretly promised Jeremiah on oath: "As GOD lives who has given us this life,^e *given us this life* *Meaning of Heb. uncertain.* I will not put you to death or leave you in the hands of those who seek your life."

Then Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, "Thus said the ETERNAL, the God of Hosts, the God of Israel: If you surrender to the officers of the king of Babylon, your life will be spared and this city will not be burned down. You and your household will live.

But if you do not surrender to the officers of the king of Babylon, this city will be delivered into the hands of the Chaldeans, who will burn it down; and you will not escape from them."

King Zedekiah said to Jeremiah, "I am worried about the Judeans who have defected to the Chaldeans; that they [the Chaldeans] might hand me over to them to abuse me."

"They will not hand you over," Jeremiah replied. "Listen to GOD's voice, to what I tell you, that it may go well with you and your life be spared.

For this is what GOD has shown me if you refuse to surrender:

All the women who are left in the palace of the king of Judah shall be brought out to the officers of the king of Babylon; and they shall say:^{class="footnote-marker">f}<i class="footnote">they shall say I.e., those women, to the king of Judah.</i>
Those who were your friends
Have seduced you and vanquished you.
Now that your feet are sunk in the mire,
They have turned their backs [on you].
</sup>

They will bring out all your wives and children to the Chaldeans, and you yourself will not escape from them. You will be captured by the king of Babylon, and this city shall be burned down."^g<i class="footnote">this city shall be burned down So Targum and Septuagint and some mss. Most mss. and the editions read "you will burn down this city by fire."</i>

Zedekiah said to Jeremiah, "Don't let a soul know about this conversation, or you will die.^h<i class="footnote">or you will die Lit. "that you may not die."</i> If the officials should hear that I have spoken with you, and they should come and say to you, 'Tell us what you said to the king; hide nothing from us, or we'll kill you.ⁱ<i class="footnote">or we'll kill you Lit. "that we may not kill you."</i> And what did the king say to you?' say to them, 'I was presenting my petition to the king not to send me back to the house of Jonathan to die there.'"

All the officials did come to Jeremiah to question him; and he replied to them just as the king had instructed him. So they stopped questioning him, for the conversation had not been overheard. Jeremiah remained in the prison compound until the day Jerusalem was captured.
When Jerusalem was captured...^j<i class="footnote">When Jerusalem was captured... This clause would read well before 39.3.</i>

Chapter 39

In the ninth year of King Zedekiah of Judah, in the tenth month, King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon moved against Jerusalem with his whole army, and they laid siege to it.

And in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, on the ninth day of the fourth month, the [walls of] the city were breached.

All the officers of the king of Babylon entered, and took up quarters at the middle gate—Nergal-sarezer, Samgar-nebo, Sarsechim the Rab-saris, Nergal-sarezer the Rab-mag,^a<i class="footnote">Rab-saris...Rab-mag Titles of officers.</i> and all the rest of the officers of the king of Babylon.

When King Zedekiah of Judah saw them, he and all the soldiers fled. They left the city at night, by way of the king's garden, through the gate between the double walls; and he set out toward the Arabah.^b*he set out toward the Arabah* Hoping to escape across the Jordan.

But the Chaldean troops pursued them, and they overtook Zedekiah in the steppes of Jericho. They captured him and brought him before King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon at Riblah in the region of Hamath; and he put him on trial.

The king of Babylon had Zedekiah's sons slaughtered at Riblah before his eyes; the king of Babylon had all the nobles of Judah slaughtered. Then the eyes of Zedekiah were put out and he was chained in bronze fetters, that he might be brought to Babylon.

The Chaldeans burned down the king's palace and the houses^c*houses* Taking Heb. singular as collective, with Kimhi. of the people by fire, and they tore down the walls of Jerusalem.

The remnant of the people that was left in the city, and the defectors who had gone over to him—the remnant of the people that was left—were exiled by Nebuzaradan, the chief of the guards, to Babylon.

But some of the poorest people who owned nothing were left in the land of Judah by Nebuzaradan, the chief of the guards, and he gave them vineyards and fields at that time.

King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon had given orders to Nebuzaradan, the chief of the guards, concerning Jeremiah:

"Take him and look after him; do him no harm, but grant whatever he asks of you."

So Nebuzaradan, the chief of the guards, and Nebushazban the Rab-saris, and Nergal-sarezer the Rab-mag, and all the commanders of the king of Babylon sent

and had Jeremiah brought from the prison compound. They committed him to the care of Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan, that he might be left at liberty in a house.^d*that he might be left at liberty in a house* Meaning of Heb. uncertain. So he dwelt among the people.

The word of GOD had come to Jeremiah while he was still confined in the prison compound:

Go and say to Ebed-melech the Cushite: "Thus said GOD of Hosts, the God of Israel: I am going to fulfill My words concerning this city—for disaster, not for good—and they shall come true on that day in your presence.

But I will save you on that day—declares GOD; you shall not be delivered into the hands of those you dread.

I will rescue you, and you shall not fall by the sword. You shall escape with your life,^e

You shall escape with your life See note at 38.2. because you trusted Me—declares GOD."

Chapter 40

The word that came to Jeremiah from GOD, after Nebuzaradan, the chief of the guards, set him free at Ramah, to which he had taken him, chained in fetters, among those from Jerusalem and Judah who were being exiled to Babylon.

The chief of the guards took charge of Jeremiah, and he said to him, "The ETERNAL your God threatened this place with this disaster; and now GOD has brought it about, by acting on the threat—because you sinned against GOD and did not pay heed. That is why this has happened to you.

Now, I release you this day from the fetters that were on your hands. If you would like to go with me to Babylon, come, and I will look after you. And if you don't want to come with me to Babylon, you need not. See, the whole land is before you: go wherever seems good and right to you."

But [Jeremiah] still did not turn back.^a*But [Jeremiah] still did not turn back* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.—"Or go to Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan, whom the king of Babylon has put in charge of the towns of Judah, and stay with him among the people, or go wherever you want to go."
The chief of the guards gave him an allowance of food, and dismissed him.

So Jeremiah came to Gedaliah son of Ahikam at Mizpah, and stayed with him among the people who were left in the land.

The army officers in the open country, and their men with them, heard that the king of Babylon had put Gedaliah son of Ahikam in charge of the region, and that he had put in his charge the men, women, and children—of the poorest in the land—those who had not been exiled to Babylon.

So they with their men came to Gedaliah at Mizpah—Ishmael son of Nethaniah; Johanan and Jonathan the sons of Kareah; Seraiah son of Tanhumeth; the sons of Ephai the Netophathite; and Jezaniah son of the Maacathite.

Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan reassured^b*reassured* Lit. "swore to." them and their men, saying, "Do not be afraid to serve the Chaldeans. Stay in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it will go well with you.

I am going to stay in Mizpah to attend upon the Chaldeans who will come to us. But you may gather wine and figs^c*figs* Lit. "summer fruit." and oil and put them in your own vessels, and settle in the towns you have occupied."

Likewise, all the Judeans who were in Moab, Ammon, and Edom, or who were in other lands, heard that the king of Babylon had let a remnant stay in Judah, and that he had put Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan in charge of them.

All these Judeans returned from all the places to which they had scattered. They came to the land of Judah, to Gedaliah at Mizpah, and they gathered large quantities of wine and figs.^d*figs* See note at v. 10. Johanan son of Kareah, and all the army officers in the open country, came to Gedaliah at Mizpah

and said to him, "Do you know that King Baalis of Ammon has sent Ishmael son of Nethaniah to kill you?" But Gedaliah son of Ahikam would not believe them.

Johanan son of Kareah also said secretly to Gedaliah at Mizpah, "Let me go and strike down Ishmael son of Nethaniah—and nobody else will know about it; otherwise he will kill you, and all the Judeans who have gathered about you will be dispersed, and the remnant of Judah will perish!"

But Gedaliah son of Ahikam answered Johanan son of Kareah, "Do not do such a thing: what you are saying about Ishmael is not true!"

Chapter 41

In the seventh month, Ishmael son of Nethaniah son of Elishama, who was of royal descent and one of the king's commanders, came with ten men to Gedaliah son of Ahikam at Mizpah; and they ate together there at Mizpah. Then Ishmael son of Nethaniah and the ten men who were with him arose and struck down Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan with the sword and

killed him, because the king of Babylon had put him in charge of the land.

Ishmael also killed all the Judeans^a*^a<i class="footnote">the Judeans I.e., their soldiers; cf. Malbim.</i>* who were with him—with Gedaliah in Mizpah—and the Chaldean soldiers who were stationed there.

The second day after Gedaliah was killed, when no one else knew about it, some men came from Shechem, Shiloh, and Samaria—eighty of them, their beards shaved, their garments torn, and their bodies gashed—carrying grain offerings and frankincense to present at the House of G^{OD}.

Ishmael son of Nethaniah went out from Mizpah to meet them, weeping as he walked. As he met them, he said to them, "Come to Gedaliah son of Ahikam."

When they came inside the town, Ishmael son of Nethaniah and the men who were with him slaughtered them [and threw their bodies] into a cistern. But there were ten men among them who said to Ishmael, "Don't kill us! We have stores hidden in a field—wheat, barley, oil, and honey." So he stopped, and did not kill them along with their fellows.—

The cistern into which Ishmael threw all the corpses of the men he had killed in the affair of Gedaliah was the one that^b*^b<i class="footnote">in the affair of Gedaliah was the one that Septuagint reads "was a large cistern, which..."</i>* King Asa had constructed on account of King Baasha of Israel. That was the one which Ishmael son of Nethaniah filled with corpses.—

Ishmael carried off all the rest of the people who were in Mizpah, including the daughters of the king—all the people left in Mizpah, over whom Nebuzaradan, the chief of the guards, had appointed Gedaliah son of Ahikam. Ishmael son of Nethaniah carried them off, and set out to cross over to the Ammonites.

Johanan son of Kareah, and all the army officers with him, heard of all the crimes committed by Ishmael son of Nethaniah.

They took all their men and went to fight against Ishmael son of Nethaniah; and they encountered him by the great pool in Gibeon.

When all the people held by Ishmael saw Johanan son of Kareah and all the army officers with him, they were glad;

all the people whom Ishmael had carried off from Mizpah turned back and went over to Johanan son of Kareah.

But Ishmael son of Nethaniah escaped from Johanan with eight men, and went to the Ammonites.

Johanan son of Kareah and all the army officers with him took all the rest of the people whom he had rescued from Ishmael son of Nethaniah^c*^c<i class="footnote">he had rescued from Ishmael son of Nethaniah Emendation yields "Ishmael son of Nethaniah had carried off."</i>* from Mizpah after he had murdered Gedaliah son of Ahikam—the men, soldiers, women, children, and eunuchs whom [Johanan] had brought back from Gibeon.

They set out, and they stopped at Geruth^d*^d<i class="footnote">Geruth Aquila reads "the sheepfolds of."</i>* Chimham, near Bethlehem, on their way to go to Egypt because of the Chaldeans. For they were afraid of them, because Ishmael son of Nethaniah had killed Gedaliah son of Ahikam, whom the king of Babylon had put in charge of the land.

Chapter 42

Then all the army officers, with Johanan son of Kareah, Jezaniah son of Hoshaiah, and all the rest of the people, great and small, approached

the prophet Jeremiah and said, "Grant our plea, and pray for us to the ETERNAL your God, for all this remnant! For we remain but a few out of many, as you can see.

Let the ETERNAL your God tell us where we should go and what we should do."

The prophet Jeremiah answered them, "Agreed: I will pray to the ETERNAL your God as you request, and I will tell you whatever response GOD gives for you. I will withhold nothing from you."

Thereupon they said to Jeremiah, "Let GOD be a true and faithful witness against us! We swear that we will do exactly as the ETERNAL your God instructs us through you—Whether it is pleasant or unpleasant, we will obey the ETERNAL our God to whom we send you, in order that it may go well with us when we obey the ETERNAL our God."

After ten days, the word of GOD came to Jeremiah.

He called Johanan son of Kareah and all the army officers, and the rest of the people, great and small,

and said to them, "Thus said the ETERNAL, the God of Israel, to whom you sent me to present your supplication:

If you remain in this land, I will build you and not overthrow, I will plant you and not uproot; for I regret the punishment I have brought upon you.

Do not be afraid of the king of Babylon, whom you fear; do not be afraid of him—declares GOD—for I am with you to save you and to rescue you from his hands.

I will dispose him to be merciful to you: he shall show you mercy and bring you back to^{class="footnote-marker">a}*class="footnote">bring you back to Change of vocalization yields "let you dwell in."</i> your own land.*

"But if you say, 'We will not stay in this land'—thus disobeying the ETERNAL your God—

if you say, 'No! We will go to the land of Egypt, so that we may not see war or hear the sound of the horn, and so that we may not hunger for bread; there we will stay,'

then hear the word of GOD, O remnant of Judah! Thus said GOD of Hosts, the God of Israel: If you turn your faces toward Egypt, and you go and sojourn there, the sword that you fear shall overtake you there, in the land of Egypt, and the famine you worry over shall follow at your heels in Egypt too; and there you shall die.

All those who turn their faces toward Egypt, in order to sojourn there, shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence. They shall have no surviving remnant of the disaster that I will bring upon them.

For thus said GOD of Hosts, the God of Israel: As My anger and wrath were poured out upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so will My wrath be poured out on you if you go to Egypt. You shall become an execration of woe, a curse^{class="footnote-marker">b}*class="footnote">an execration of woe, a curse I.e., a standard by which people execrate and curse; cf. note at 24.9.</i> and a mockery; and you shall never again see this place.*

GOD has spoken against you, O remnant of Judah! Do not go to Egypt! Know well, then—for I warn you this day that you were deceitful at heart when you sent me to the ETERNAL your God, saying, 'Pray for us to the ETERNAL our God; and whatever the ETERNAL our God may say, just tell us and we will do it.'

I told you today, and you have not obeyed the ETERNAL your God in respect to all that I was sent to tell you—

know well, then, that you shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence in the place where you want to go and sojourn."

Chapter 43

When Jeremiah had finished speaking all these words to all the people—all the words of the ETERNAL their God, with which the ETERNAL their God had sent him to them—

Azariah son of Hoshaiah and Johanan son of Kareah and all the arrogant men said to Jeremiah, "You are lying! The ETERNAL our God did not send you to say, 'Don't go to Egypt and sojourn there'!

It is Baruch son of Neriah who is inciting you against us, so that we will be delivered into the hands of the Chaldeans to be killed or to be exiled to Babylon!"

So Johanan son of Kareah and all the army officers and the rest of the people did not obey GOD's command to remain in the land of Judah.

Instead, Johanan son of Kareah and all the army officers took the entire remnant of Judah—those who had returned from all the countries to which they had been scattered and had sojourned in the land of Judah, men, women, and children; and the daughters of the king and all the people whom Nebuzaradan the chief of the guards had left with Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan, as well as the prophet Jeremiah and Baruch son of Neriah—

and they went to Egypt. They did not obey GOD.
They arrived at Tahpanhes,

and the word of GOD came to Jeremiah in Tahpanhes: Get yourself large stones, and embed them in mortar in the brick structure at the entrance to Pharaoh's palace in Tahpanhes, with some Judeans looking on.

And say to them: "Thus said GOD of Hosts, the God of Israel: I am sending for My servant King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, and I^a *Septuagint reads "he."* will set his throne over these stones that I have embedded. He will spread out his pavilion^b *pavilion* Meaning of Heb. uncertain. over them.

He will come and attack the land of Egypt, delivering
Those destined for the plague, to the plague,
Those destined for captivity, to captivity,
And those destined for the sword, to the sword.

And I^c *See first note at v. 10.* will set fire to the temples of the gods of Egypt; he will burn them down and carry them^d *them* I.e., the gods. off. He shall wrap himself up in the land of Egypt, as a shepherd wraps himself up in his garment. And he shall depart from there in safety. He shall smash the obelisks of the Temple of the Sun that is in the land of Egypt, and he shall burn down the temples of the gods of Egypt."

Chapter 44

The word that came to Jeremiah for all the Judeans living in the land of Egypt, living in Migdol, Tahpanhes, and Noph, and in the land of Pathros: Thus said GOD of Hosts, the God of Israel: You have seen all the disaster that I brought on Jerusalem and on all the towns of Judah. They are a ruin today, and no one inhabits them,

on account of the wicked things they did to vex Me, going to make offerings in worship of other gods that they had not known—neither they nor you nor your ancestors.

Yet I persistently sent to you all My servants the prophets, to say, "I beg you not to do this abominable thing that I hate."

But they would not listen or give ear, to turn back from their wickedness and not make offerings to other gods;

so My fierce anger was poured out, and it blazed against the towns of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem. And they became a desolate ruin, as they still are today.

And now, thus said the ETERNAL, the God of Hosts, the God of Israel: Why are you doing such great harm to yourselves, so that every man and woman, child and infant of yours shall be cut off from the midst of Judah, and no remnant shall be left of you?

For you vex Me by your deeds, making offering to other gods in the land of Egypt where you have come to sojourn, so that you shall be cut off and become a curse^{class="footnote-marker">a}*class="footnote">a curse See note at 24.9.</i> and a mockery among all the nations of earth.*

Have you forgotten the wicked acts of your ancestors, of the kings of Judah and their^{class="footnote-marker">b}*class="footnote">their Heb. "his."</i> wives, and your own wicked acts and those of your wives, that were committed in the land of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem?*

No one has shown contrition to this day, and no one has shown reverence. You^{class="footnote-marker">c}*class="footnote">You Heb. "They."</i> have not followed the Teaching and the laws that I set before you and before your ancestors.*

Assuredly, thus said GOD of Hosts, the God of Israel: I am going to set My face against you for punishment, to cut off all of Judah. I will take the remnant of Judah who turned their faces toward the land of Egypt, to go and sojourn there, and they shall be utterly consumed in the land of Egypt. They shall fall by the sword, they shall be consumed by famine; great and small alike shall die by the sword and by famine, and they shall become an execration and a desolation, a curse^{class="footnote-marker">d}*class="footnote">an execration...a curse See note at 42.18.</i> and a mockery.*

I will punish those who live in the land of Egypt as I punished Jerusalem, with the sword, with famine, and with pestilence.

Of the remnant of Judah who came to sojourn here in the land of Egypt, no survivor or fugitive shall be left to return to the land of Judah. Though they all long to return and dwell there, none shall return except [a few] survivors.

Thereupon they answered Jeremiah—all the men who knew that their wives made offerings to other gods; all the women present, a large gathering; and all the people who lived in Pathros in the land of Egypt:

"We will not listen to you in the matter about which you spoke to us in the name of GOD.

On the contrary, we will do everything that we have vowed^{class="footnote-marker">e}*class="footnote">everything that we have vowed Lit. "everything that has gone forth from our mouth."</i>—to make offerings to the Queen of Heaven^{class="footnote-marker">f}*class="footnote">Queen of Heaven See note at 7.18.</i> and to pour libations to her, as we used to do,^{class="footnote-marker">g}*class="footnote">do Cf. 7.18.</i> we and our ancestors, our kings and our officials, in the towns of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem. For then we had plenty to eat, we were well-off, and suffered no misfortune.***

But ever since we stopped making offerings to the Queen of Heaven and pouring libations to her, we have lacked everything, and we have been consumed by the sword and by famine.

And when we make offerings to the Queen of Heaven and pour libations to her, is it without our husbands' approval that we have made cakes in her likeness^h*< i class="footnote">in her likeness Meaning of Heb. uncertain.</i>* and poured libations to her?" Jeremiah replied to all the people, men and women—all the people who argued with him. He said,

"Indeed, the offerings you presented in the towns of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem—you, your ancestors, your kings, your officials, and the people of the land—were remembered by GOD and brought to mind!

When GOD could no longer bear your evil practices and the abominations you committed, your land became a desolate ruin and a curse,ⁱ*< i class="footnote">a curse See note at 24.9; 42.18.</i>* without inhabitant, as is still the case.

Because you burned incense and sinned against GOD and did not obey GOD—whose Teaching, whose laws, and whose exhortations you did not follow—therefore this disaster has befallen you, as is still the case."

Jeremiah further said to all the people, including all the women: "Hear the word of GOD, all Judeans in the land of Egypt!

Thus said GOD of Hosts, the God of Israel: You and your wives have confirmed by deed what you spoke in words:^j*< i class="footnote">confirmed by deed what you spoke in words Lit. "spoken with your mouth and fulfilled by your hands."</i>* 'We will fulfill the vows that we made, to burn incense to the Queen of Heaven and to pour libations to her.' So fulfill your vows; perform your vows!

"Yet hear the word of GOD, all Judeans who dwell in the land of Egypt! Lo, I swear by My great name—said GOD—that none of Judah's contingent in all the land of Egypt shall ever again invoke My name, saying, 'As my Sovereign GOD lives!' I will be watchful over them to their hurt, not to their benefit; all of Judah's contingent in the land of Egypt shall be consumed by sword and by famine, until they cease to be.

Only the few who survive the sword shall return from the land of Egypt to the land of Judah. All the remnant of Judah who came to the land of Egypt to sojourn there shall learn whose word will be fulfilled—Mine or theirs!

"And this shall be the sign to you—declares GOD—that I am going to deal with you in this place, so that you may know that My threats of punishment against you will be fulfilled:

Thus said GOD: I will deliver Pharaoh Hophra, king of Egypt, into the hands of his enemies, those who seek his life, just as I delivered King Zedekiah of Judah into the hands of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, his enemy who sought his life."

Chapter 45

The word that the prophet Jeremiah spoke to Baruch son of Neriah, when he was writing these words in a scroll at Jeremiah's dictation, in the fourth year of King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah:

Thus said the ETERNAL, the God of Israel, concerning you, Baruch:

You say, "Woe is me! GOD has added grief to my pain. I am worn out with groaning, and I have found no rest."

Thus shall you speak to him: "Thus said GOD: I am going to overthrow what I have built, and uproot what I have planted—this applies

to the whole land.^a<i class="footnote">this applies to the whole land Meaning of Heb. uncertain.</i>

And do you expect great things for yourself? Don't expect them. For I am going to bring disaster upon all flesh—declares G<small>OD</small>—but I will at least grant you your life^b<i class="footnote">at least grant you your life Cf. note at 21.9.</i> in all the places where you may go."

Chapter 46

The word of G<small>OD</small> to the prophet Jeremiah concerning the nations.

Concerning Egypt, about the army of Pharaoh Neco, king of Egypt, which was at the river Euphrates near Carchemish, and which was defeated by King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, in the fourth year of King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah.

Get ready buckler and shield,
And move forward to battle!
Harness the horses;
Mount, you riders!
Fall in line, helmets on!
Burnish the lances,
Don your armor!
Why do I see them dismayed,
Yielding ground?
Their fighters are crushed,
They flee in haste
And do not turn back—
Terror all around!
—declares G<small>OD</small>.
The swift cannot get away,
The warrior cannot escape.^a<i class="footnote">The swift cannot get away, / The warrior cannot escape Lit. "Let not the swift get away, / Let not the warrior escape."</i>
In the north, by the river Euphrates,
They stagger and fall.
Who is this that rises like the Nile,
Like streams whose waters surge?
It is Egypt that rises like the Nile,
Like streams whose waters surge,
That said, "I will rise,
I will cover the earth,
I will wipe out towns
And those who dwell in them.
Advance, O horses,
Dash madly, O chariots!
Let the warriors go forth,
Cush and Put, that grasp the shield,
And the Ludim who grasp and draw the bow!"

But that day shall be for my Sovereign G<small>OD</small> of Hosts a day for exacting retribution from all foes. The sword shall devour; it shall be sated and drunk with their blood. For my Sovereign G<small>OD</small>

of Hosts is preparing a sacrifice in the northland, by the river Euphrates.

Go up to Gilead and get balm,
Fair Maiden Egypt.
In vain do you seek many remedies,
There is no healing for you.

Nations have heard your shame;
The earth resounds with your screams.
For warrior stumbles against warrior;
The two fall down together.

The word that OD spoke to the prophet Jeremiah about the coming of King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon to attack the land of Egypt:

Declare in Egypt, proclaim in Migdol,
Proclaim in Noph and Tahpanhes!
Say: Take your posts and stand ready,
For the sword has devoured all around you!

Why are your stalwarts swept away?
They did not stand firm,
For

OD thrust them down;

Many were made to stumble,
They fell over one another.
They said:
"Up! let us return to our people,
To the land of our birth,
Because of the deadly^{footnote-marker}*footnote***deadly** Meaning of Heb. uncertain." sword."

There they called Pharaoh king of Egypt:
"Braggart who let the hour go by."^{footnote-marker}*footnote***Braggart who let the hour go by** Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

As I live—declares the King,^{footnote-marker}*footnote***King** I.e., the One who leads the celestial army.
Whose name is OD of Hosts—
As surely as Tabor is among the mountains
And Carmel is by the sea,
So shall this come to pass.^{footnote-marker}*footnote***As surely as Tabor ... come to pass** Meaning of Heb. uncertain.
Equip yourself for exile,
Fair Egypt, you who dwell secure!
For Noph shall become a waste,
Desolate, without inhabitants.

Egypt is a handsome heifer—
A gadfly^{footnote-marker}*footnote***gadfly** Or "butcher"; meaning of Heb. uncertain. from the north is coming, coming!^{footnote-marker}*footnote***is coming, coming** Many mss. read "will come upon her."

The mercenaries, too, in her midst
Are like stall-fed calves;
They too shall turn tail,
Flee as one, and make no

stand.

Their day of disaster is upon them,

The hour of their doom.

She shall rustle away like a snake

^h

She shall rustle away like a snake Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

As they come marching in force;

They shall come against her with axes,

Like hewers of wood.

They shall cut down her forest

—declares

OD—

Though it cannot be measured;

For they are more numerous than locusts,

And cannot be counted.

Fair Egypt shall be shamed,

Handed over to the people of the north.

OD

of Hosts, the God of Israel, has said: I will inflict punishment on Amonⁱ*Amon* Tutelary deity of the city No (Thebes); cf. Nah. 3.8. of No and on Pharaoh—on Egypt, her gods, and her kings—on Pharaoh and all who rely on him.

I will deliver them into the hands of those who seek to kill them, into the hands of King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon and into the hands of his subjects. But afterward she shall be inhabited again as in former days, declares OD.

But you,

Have no fear, My servant Jacob,

Be not dismayed, O Israel!

I will deliver you from far away,

Your folk from their land of captivity;

And Jacob again shall have calm

And quiet, with none to trouble him.

But you, have no fear,

My servant Jacob

—declares

OD—

For I am with you.

I will make an end of all the nations

Among which I have banished you,

But I will not make an end of you!

I will not leave you unpunished,

But I will chastise you in measure.

Chapter 47

The word of OD that came to the prophet Jeremiah concerning the Philistines, before Pharaoh conquered Gaza.

Thus said

OD:

See, waters are rising from the north,

They shall become a raging torrent,

They shall flood the land and its creatures,

The towns and their inhabitants.

People shall cry out,

class="poetry indentAll">All the inhabitants of the land shall
howl,
At the clatter of the stamping hoofs of
Pharaoh's^a<i
class="footnote">Pharaoh's Heb. "his"; cf. v. 1.</i>
stallions,
At the noise of his
chariots,
The rumbling of their
wheels,
Parents shall not look
to their children
Out of sheer
helplessness^b<i
class="footnote">sheer helplessness Lit. "weakness of hands."</i>
Because of the day that is
coming
For ravaging all the
Philistines,
For cutting off
every last ally
Of Tyre and
Sidon.
For
G<small>OD</small> will ravage the Philistines,
<span class="poetry
indentAll">The remnant from the island of Caphtor.
Baldness<sup class="footnote-
marker">c</sup><i class="footnote">Baldness Shaving the head and
gashing the body were expressions of mourning; cf. Deut. 14.1.</i> has
come upon Gaza,
Ashkelon is
destroyed.
O remnant of their
valley,^d<i
class="footnote">their valley Septuagint reads "the Anakites"; cf.
Josh. 11.22.</i>
How long will you
gash yourself?^e<i
class="footnote">gash yourself Meaning of Heb. uncertain.</i>
"O sword of
G<small>OD</small>,
When will you be
quiet at last?
Withdraw into
your sheath,
Rest and be
still!"
How can it<sup class="footnote-
marker">f</sup><i class="footnote">it Heb. "you."</i> be
quiet
When G<small>OD</small>
has given it orders
Against Ashkelon
and the seacoast,
Given it
assignment there?

Chapter 48

Concerning Moab.^a<i class="footnote">A
number of parallels to this chapter occur in Isa. 15-16.</i>
<span
class="poetry indentAll">Thus said G<small>OD</small> of Hosts,
the God of Israel:
Alas, that Nebo
should be ravaged,
Kiriathaim
captured and shamed,
The
stronghold^b<i
class="footnote">The stronghold Or "Misgab."</i> shamed and
dismayed!
Moab's glory is no more;
<span
class="poetry indentAll">In Heshbon they have planned<sup
class="footnote-marker">c</sup><i class="footnote">planned Heb.
<i>hashebu</i>, play on Heshbon.</i> evil against her:
<span
class="poetry indentAll">"Come, let us make an end of her as a
nation!"
You too, O Madmen,
shall be silenced;^d<i
class="footnote">silenced Heb. <i>tiddommi</i>, play on Madmen,

the name of a town.

The sword is following you.

Hark! an outcry from Horonaim.

Destruction and utter ruin!

Moab is broken;

Her young ones cry aloud;

^e*Her young ones cry aloud* Emendation yields "They cry aloud as far as Zoar"; cf. Isa. 15.5.

They climb to Luhith

Weeping continually;

On the descent to Horonaim

A distressing cry of anguish is heard:

Flee, save your lives!

And be like Aroer in the desert.

^f*And be like Aroer in the desert* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

Surely, because of your trust

In your wealth and in your treasures,

You too shall be captured.

And Chemosh shall go forth to exile,

Together with his priests and attendants.

The ravager shall come to every town;

No town shall escape.

The valley shall be devastated

And the tableland laid waste

—because

GOD has spoken.

Give wings to Moab,

For she must go hence.

^g*wings to Moab,* / For she must go hence Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

Her towns shall become desolate,

With no one living in them.

Cursed be he who is slack in doing GOD's work! Cursed be he who withholds his sword from blood!

Moab has been secure from his youth on—

He is settled on his lees

And has not been poured from vessel to vessel—

He has never gone into exile.

Therefore his fine flavor has remained

And his bouquet is unspoiled.

But days are coming—declares GOD—when I will send to him those who will decant him;

^h*decant him* Or "press forward against him"; cf. Isa. 63.1. they shall empty his vessels and smash his jars.

And Moab shall be shamed because of Chemosh, as the House of Israel were shamed because of Bethel, on whom they relied.

How can you say: We are warriors,

Valiant men for war?

Moab is ravaged,

His towns have been entered,

His choice young men

Have gone down to the slaughter

—declares the King

ⁱ

ⁱ**King** See note at 46.18. whose name is GOD of Hosts.

The doom of Moab is coming close,
His downfall is approaching swiftly.

Condole with him, all who live near him,
All you who know him by name!
Say: "Alas, the strong rod is broken,
The lordly staff!"

Descend from glory
And sit in thirst,^j**thirst** Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

O inhabitant of Fair Dibon;
For the ravager of Moab has entered your town,
He has destroyed your fortresses.

Stand by the road and look out,
O inhabitant of Aroer.
Ask of him who is fleeing
And of her who is escaping:
Say, "What has happened?"

Moab is shamed and dismayed;
Howl and cry aloud!
Tell at the Arnon
That Moab is ravaged!

Judgment has come upon the tableland—upon Holon, Jahzah, and Mephaath;
 upon Dibon, Nebo, and Beth-diblathaim;
 upon Kiriathaim, Beth-gamul, and Beth-meon;
 upon Kerioth and Bozrah—upon all the towns of the land of Moab, far and near.

The might of Moab has been cut down,
His strength is broken
—declares GOD.

Get him drunk
For he vaunted himself against GOD.
Moab shall vomit till he is drained,
And he too shall be a laughingstock.

Wasn't Israel a laughingstock to you?
Was he ever caught among thieves,
That you should shake your head^k**shake your head** In mockery.

Whenever you speak of him?

Desert the cities
And dwell in the crags,
O inhabitants of Moab!
Be like a dove that nests
In the sides of a pit.

We have heard of Moab's pride—
Most haughty is he—
Of his arrogance and pride,
His haughtiness and self-exaltation.

I know his insolence—declares GOD—the wickedness that is in him,^l**in him**

Cf. note at Isa. 16.6. the wickedness he has^m *he has* Heb. "they have." committed.

Therefore I will howl for Moab,
I will cry out for all Moab,
Iⁿ *I* Heb. "He." will moan for the people of Kir-heres.

With greater weeping than for Jazer
I weep for you, O vine of Sibmah,
Whose tendrils crossed the sea,
Reached to the sea,^o *Reached to the sea* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.
to Jazer.
A ravager has come down
Upon your fig and grape harvests.

Rejoicing and gladness
Are gone from the farmland,
From the country of Moab;
I have put an end to wine in the presses,
No one treads [the grapes] with shouting—
The shout is a shout no more.^p *The shout is a shout no more* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

There is an outcry from Heshbon to Elealeh,
They raise their voices as far as Jahaz,
From Zoar to Horonaim and Eglath-shelishiah.
The Waters of Nimrim
Shall also become desolation.

And I will make an end in Moab
—declares GOD—
Of those who offer at a shrine
And burn incense to their god.

Therefore,
My heart moans for Moab like a flute;
Like a flute my heart moans
For the people of Kir-heres—
Therefore,
The gains they have made shall vanish^q *Therefore, / The gains they have made shall vanish* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.—
For every head is bald
And every beard is shorn;
On all hands there are gashes,
And on the loins sackcloth.
On all the roofs of Moab,
And in its squares
There is naught but lamentation;
For I have broken Moab
Like a vessel no one wants—
declares GOD.

How he is dismayed! Wail!
How Moab has turned his back in shame!
Moab shall be a laughingstock
And a shock to all those near him.

For thus said
G<small>OD</small>:
See, he soars like
an eagle
And spreads out his
wings against Moab!
Kerioth shall be captured
<span
class="poetry indentAll">And the strongholds shall be
seized.
In that day, the heart
of Moab's warriors
Shall be like
the heart of a woman in travail.
And Moab shall be destroyed as a
people,
For he vaunted himself
against G<small>OD</small>.
Terror, and pit, and trap<sup
class="footnote-marker">r</sup><i class="footnote">Terror, and pit,
and trap See note at Isa. 24.17.</i>
<span class="poetry
indentAll">Upon you who dwell in Moab!
<span class="poetry
indentAllDouble">—declares G<small>OD</small>.
He who flees from the
terror
Shall fall into the
pit;
And he who climbs out of
the pit
Shall be caught in the
trap.
For I will bring upon
Moab
The year of their
doom
—declares
G<small>OD</small>.
In the shelter of Heshbon
<span
class="poetry indentAll">Fugitives halt exhausted;
<span
class="poetry indentAll">For fire went forth from
Heshbon,
Flame from the
midst^s<i
class="footnote">midst Emendation yields "house."</i> of
Sihon,
Consuming the brow of
Moab,
The pate of the people of
Shaon.^t<i
class="footnote">Shaon Or "tumult."</i>
Woe to you, O Moab!
<span
class="poetry indentAll">The people of Chemosh are
undone,
For your sons are
carried off into captivity,
Your
daughters into exile.

But I will restore the fortunes of Moab in the days to come—declares
G<small>OD</small>.
Thus far is the judgment on Moab.

Chapter 49

Concerning the Ammonites.
Thus said
 G<small>OD</small>:
Has Israel

no sons,
Has he no

heir?
Then why has

Milcom^a<i

class="footnote">Milcom The name of the Ammonite deity; vocalized

Malcam here and in v. 3.</i> dispossessed Gad,
<span class="poetry
indentAll">And why have his people settled in Gad's<sup

class="footnote-marker">b</sup><i class="footnote">Gad's Heb.

"his."</i> towns?
Assuredly, days are coming
<span
class="poetry indentAllDouble">—declares G<small>OD</small>—

When I will sound the alarm of
war
Against Rabbah of the
Ammonites;
It shall become a

desolate mound,

And its villages shall be set on fire.

And Israel shall dispossess

Those who dispossessed him

—said

GOD.

Howl, O Heshbon, for Ai is ravaged!

Cry out, O daughters of Rabbah!

Gird on sackcloth, lament,

And run to and fro in the sheepfolds.

^cAnd run to and fro in the sheepfolds

Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

For Milcom shall go into exile,

Together with his priests and attendants.

Why do you glory in strength,

Your strength is drained,

^dWhy ... drained

Meaning of Heb. uncertain; for "strength" cf. Akkadian *emuqu*.

O rebellious daughter,

You who relied on your treasures,

[Who said:] Who dares attack me?

I am bringing terror upon you

—declares my Sovereign

GOD of Hosts—

From all those around you.

Every one of you shall be driven in every direction,

^ein every direction

Lit. "straight ahead."

And none shall gather in the fugitives.

But afterward I will restore the fortunes of the Ammonites—declares

GOD.

Concerning Edom.

Thus said

GOD of Hosts:

Is there no more wisdom in Teman?

Has counsel vanished from the prudent?

Has their wisdom gone stale?

Flee, turn away, sit down low,

O inhabitants of Dedan,

For I am bringing Esau's doom upon him,

The time when I deal with him.

If vintagers were to come upon you,

Would they leave no gleanings?

Even thieves in the night

Would destroy only for their needs!

^fIf vintagers were to come upon you, / Would they leave no gleanings? / Even thieves in the night / Would destroy only for their needs!

Cf. Obad. 1.5: "If thieves were to come to you, / Marauders by night, / They would steal no more than they needed. / If vintagers came to you, / They would surely leave some gleanings."

But it is I who have bared Esau,

Have exposed his place of concealment;

He cannot hide.

His offspring is ravaged,

His kin and his neighbors—

He is no

more.

^g*He is no more* Some Septuagint mss. read "And there is none to say."

"Leave your orphans with me,
I will rear them;
Let your widows rely on me!"

For thus said GOD: If they who rightly should not drink of the cup must drink it, are you the one to go unpunished? You shall not go unpunished: you will have to drink!

For by Myself I swear—declares GOD—Bozrah shall become a desolation, a mockery, a ruin, and a curse;^h*a curse* Cf. note at 24.9 and 42.18. and all its towns shall be ruins for all time.

I have received tidings from
GOD,
And an envoy is sent out among the nations:
Assemble, and move against her,
And rise up for war!

For I will make you least among nations,
Most despised among humankind.

Your horrible nature,ⁱ*Your horrible nature* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.
Your arrogant heart has seduced you,
You who dwell in clefts of the rock,
Who occupy the height of the hill!
Should you nest as high as the eagle,
From there I will pull you down
—declares GOD.

And Edom shall be a cause of appallment; whoever passes by will be appalled and will hiss^j*hiss* Cf. note at 18.16. at all its wounds. It shall be like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah and their neighbors—said GOD: nobody shall live there, no human shall sojourn there.

It shall be as when a lion comes up out of the jungle of the Jordan against a secure pasture: in a moment I can harry him out of it and appoint over it anyone I choose.^k*I can harry him out of it and appoint over it anyone I choose* Emendation yields "he can harry them [i.e., the sheep] out of it; and what champion could one place in charge of them?" Then who is like Me? Who can summon Me? Who is the shepherd that can stand up against Me?

Hear, then, the plan that GOD has devised against Edom, and what has been purposed against the inhabitants of Teman:
Surely the shepherd boys
Shall drag them away;
Surely the pasture shall be
Aghast because of them.

At the sound of their downfall
The earth shall shake;
The sound of screaming
Shall be heard at the Sea of Reeds.

See, like an eagle he flies up,
He soars and spreads his wings against Bozrah;
And the

heart of Edom's warriors in that day

Shall be like the heart of a woman in travail.

Concerning Damascus.

Hamath and Arpad are shamed,

For they have heard bad news.

They shake with anxiety,

Like

¹*Like* So a few mss. Most mss. and editions read "In." the sea that cannot rest.

Damascus has grown weak,

She has turned around to flee;

Trembling has seized her,

Pain and anguish have taken hold of her,

Like a woman in childbirth.

How has the glorious city not been deserted,

^m*How has the glorious city not been deserted* Emendation yields "How has the glorious city been deserted"; so Vulgate.

The citadel of my joy!

Assuredly, her young men shall lie fallen in her squares.

And all her warriors shall be stilled in that day

—declares OD of Hosts.

I will set fire to the wall of Damascus,

And it shall consume the fortresses of Ben-hadad.

Concerning Kedar and the kingdoms of Hazor, which King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon conquered.

Thus said OD:

Arise, march against Kedar,

And ravage the Kedemites!

They will take away their tents and their flocks,

Their tent cloths and all their gear;

They shall carry off their camels,

And shall proclaim against them:

Terror all around!

Flee, wander far,

Sit down low, O inhabitants of Hazor

—says OD.

For King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon

Has devised a plan against you

And formed a purpose against you:

Rise up, attack a tranquil nation

That dwells secure

—says OD—

That has no barred gates,

That dwells alone.

Their camels shall become booty,

And their abundant flocks a spoil;

And I will scatter to every quarter

Those who have their hair clipped;

And from every direction I will bring

Disaster upon them

—says OD.

Hazor shall become a lair of jackals,
A desolation for all time.
No one shall live there,
No human shall sojourn there.

The word of GOD that came to the prophet Jeremiah concerning Elam, at the beginning of the reign of King Zedekiah of Judah: Thus said GOD of Hosts: I am going to break the bow of Elam, the mainstay of their strength.

And I shall bring four winds against Elam from the four quarters of heaven, and scatter them to all those winds. There shall not be a nation to which the fugitives from Elam do not come.

And I will break Elam before their enemies, before those who seek their lives; and I will bring disaster upon them, My flaming wrath—declares GOD. And I will dispatch the sword after them until I have consumed them.

And I will set My throne in Elam,
And wipe out from there king and officials
—says
GOD.

But in the days to come I will restore the fortunes of Elam—declares GOD.

Chapter 50

The word that GOD spoke concerning Babylon, the land of the Chaldeans, through the prophet Jeremiah:

Declare among the nations, and proclaim;
Raise a standard, proclaim;
Hide nothing!
Say:
Babylon is captured,
Bel^a*Bel* A name of the city god of Babylon. is shamed,
Merodach^b*Merodach* Another name of the city god of Babylon. is dismayed.
Her idols are shamed,
Her fetishes dismayed.

For a nation from the north has attacked her,
It will make her land a desolation.
No one shall dwell in it,
Both human and animal shall wander away.

In those days and at that time—declares GOD—the people of Israel together with the people of Judah shall come, and they shall weep as they go to seek the ETERNAL their God.

They shall inquire for Zion; in that direction their faces shall turn; they shall come^c*they shall come* Heb. "come!" (in the plural). and attach themselves to GOD by a covenant for all time, which shall never be forgotten.

My people were lost sheep: their shepherds led them astray, they drove them out to the mountains, they roamed from mount to hill, they forgot their own resting place.

All who encountered them devoured them; and their foes said, "We shall not be held guilty, because they have sinned against GOD, the true Pasture, the Hope of their ancestors—GOD."

>Flee from Babylon,
>Leave the land of the Chaldeans,
>And be like he-goats that lead the flock!
>For see, I am rousing and leading
>An assemblage of great nations against Babylon
>From the lands of the north.
>They shall draw up their lines against her,
>There she shall be captured.
>Their arrows are like those of a skilled warrior^d
>b>a skilled warrior
So many mss., editions, and versions; other mss. and editions read "a warrior who bereaves."
>Who does not turn back without hitting the mark.
>Chaldea shall be despoiled,
>All her spoilers shall be sated
>—declares
GOD.
>For you rejoiced, you exulted,
>You who plundered My possession;
>You stamped like a heifer treading grain,
>You neighed like steeds.
>So your mother will be utterly shamed,
>She who bore you will be disgraced.
>Behold the end of the nations—
>Wilderness, desert, and steppe!
>Because of GOD's wrath she shall not be inhabited;
>She shall be utterly desolate.
>Whoever passes by Babylon will be appalled
>And will hiss^e
>b>hiss Cf. note at 18.16. at all her wounds.
>Range yourselves round about Babylon,
>All you who draw the bow;
>Shoot at her, don't spare arrows,
>For she has sinned against GOD.
>Raise a shout against her all about!
>She has surrendered;^f
>b>She has surrendered Lit. "She has given her hand"; meaning of Heb. uncertain.
>Her bastions have fallen,
>Her walls are thrown down—
>This is GOD's vengeance.
>Take vengeance on her,
>Do to her as she has done!
>Make an end in Babylon of sowers,
>And of wielders of the sickle at harvest time.
>Because of the deadly^g
>b>deadly Meaning of Heb. uncertain.
>Everyone shall turn back to their own people,
>All shall flee to their own land.

Israel are scattered sheep, harried by lions. First the king of Assyria devoured them, and in the end King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon crunched their bones.

Assuredly, thus said OD of Hosts, the God of Israel: I will deal with the king of Babylon and his land as I dealt with the king of Assyria.

And I will lead Israel back to his pasture, and he shall graze in Carmel and Bashan, and eat his fill in the hill country of Ephraim and in Gilead.

In those days and at that time
—declares OD—
The iniquity of Israel shall be sought,
And there shall be none;
The sins of Judah,
And none shall be found;
For I will pardon those I allow to survive.

Advance against her—the land of Merathaim^h*the land of Merathaim* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.—
And against the inhabitants of Pekod;
Ruin and destroy after them to the last
—says OD—
Do just as I have commanded you.

Hark! War in the land
And vast destruction!

How the hammer of the whole earth
Has been hacked and shattered!
How Babylon has become
An appallment among the nations!

I set a snare for you, O Babylon,
And you were trapped unawares;
You were found and caught,
Because you challenged OD.

OD

has opened the divine armory
And brought out the weapons of wrath;
For that is the task
Of my Sovereign OD of Hosts
In the land of the Chaldeans.

Come against her from every quarter;ⁱ*from every quarter* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.—
Break open her granaries,
Pile her up like heaps of grain,^j*Pile her up like heaps of grain* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.—
And destroy her, let her have no remnant!

Destroy all!^k*Destroy all* Emendation yields "A sword against"; cf. vv. 35ff.—
Let them go down to slaughter.
Alas for them, their day is come,
The hour of their doom!

Hark! fugitives are
 escaping
From the land of
 Babylon,
To tell in Zion of the
 vengeance of the ETERNAL</small> our God,
<span
 class="poetry indentAll">Vengeance for the holy<sup
 class="footnote-marker">1</sup><i class="footnote">the holy Lit.
 "His."</i> temple.

Summon archers against
 Babylon,
All who draw the
 bow!
Encamp against her round
 about,
Let none of her people
 escape.
Pay her back for her
 actions,
Do to her just what she
 has done;
For she has acted
 insolently against GOD</small>,
<span class="poetry
 indentAll">The Holy One of Israel.

Assuredly, her young men shall fall in her
 squares,
And all her warriors
 shall perish in that day
—
 declares GOD</small>.

I am going to deal with you, O
 Insolence
—declares my
 Sovereign GOD</small> of Hosts—
<span class="poetry
 indentAll">For your day is come, the time when I doom you:

Insolence shall stumble and
 fall,
With none to raise her
 up.
I will set her cities on
 fire,
And it shall consume
 everything around her.

Thus said GOD</small> of
 Hosts:
The people of Israel are
 oppressed,
And so too the people
 of Judah;
All their captors held
 them,
They refused to let them
 go.

Their mighty Redeemer,
<span
 class="poetry indentAll">Whose name is GOD</small> of
 Hosts,
Will champion their cause—

So as to give rest to the
 earth,
And unrest to the
 inhabitants of Babylon.

A sword against the
 Chaldeans
—declares
 GOD</small>—
And against
 the inhabitants of Babylon,
<span class="poetry
 indentAll">Against its officials and its sages!

A sword against the diviners, that they be
 made fools of!
A sword against
 the warriors, that they be dismayed!

A sword against its horses and
 chariots,
And against all the
 motley crowd in its midst,
That
 they become women!
A sword
 against its treasures, that they be pillaged!

A drought<sup class="footnote-
 marker">m</sup><i class="footnote">drought <i>Horeb</i>, play on
 <i>hereb</i>, "sword" in preceding verses.</i> against its waters, that
 they be dried up!
For it is a land of
 idols;
They are besotted by

their dread images.

ⁿ
dread images Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

Assuredly,

Wildcats and hyenas

^o
Wildcats and hyenas Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

shall dwell [there],

And ostriches shall dwell there;

It shall never be settled again,

Nor inhabited throughout the ages.

It shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and their neighbors— declares GOD; nobody shall live there, no human shall sojourn there.

Lo, a people comes from the northland;

A great nation and many kings are roused

From the remotest parts of the earth.

They grasp the bow and javelin,

They are cruel, they show no mercy;

The sound of them is like the roaring sea.

They ride upon horses,

Accoutered like a man for battle,

Against you, O Fair Babylon!

The king of Babylon has heard the report of them,

And his hands are weakened;

Anguish seizes him,

Pangs like a woman in childbirth.

It shall be as when a lion comes out of the jungle of the Jordan against a secure pasture: in a moment I can harry them out of it and appoint over it anyone I choose.

^p
I can harry them out of it and appoint over it anyone I choose See note at 49.19.

Then who is like Me? Who can summon Me? Who is the shepherd that can stand up against Me?

Hear, then, the plan that GOD has devised against Babylon, and has purposed against the land of Chaldea:

Surely the shepherd boys

Shall drag them away;

Surely the pasture shall be

Aghast because of them.

At the sound of Babylon's capture

The earth quakes,

And an outcry is heard among the nations.

Chapter 51

Thus said

GOD:

See, I am rousing a destructive wind

Against Babylon and the inhabitants of Leb-kamai.

^a
Leb-kamai A cipher for *Kasdim* "Chaldea."

I will send strangers

^b
strangers Change of vocalization yields "winnowers." against Babylon, and they shall winnow her.

And they shall strip her land bare;

They shall beset her on all sides

On the day of disaster.

Let^c<i class="footnote">Let Some Heb. mss. and ancient versions read "Let not" here and in next line.</i> the archer draw his bow,
And let him stand ready in his coat of mail!
Show no pity to her young men,
Wipe out all her host!

Let them fall slain in the land of Chaldea,
Pierced through in her streets.

For Israel and Judah were not bereft^d<i class="footnote">bereft Lit. "widowed."</i>
Of their God- G<small>OD</small> of Hosts,
But their land was filled with guilt
Before the Holy One of Israel.

Flee from the midst of Babylon
And save your lives, each of you!
Do not perish for her iniquity;
For this is a time of vengeance for G<small>OD</small>,
Who will deal retribution to her.

Babylon was a golden cup in G<small>OD</small>'s hand,
It made the whole earth drunk;
The nations drank of her wine-
That is why the nations are mad.

Suddenly Babylon has fallen and is shattered;
Howl over her!
Get balm for her wounds:
Perhaps she can be healed.

We tried to cure Babylon
But she was incurable.
Let us leave her and go,
Each to our own land;
For her punishment reaches to heaven,
It is as high as the sky.

<small>OD</small>

 has proclaimed our vindication;
Come, let us recount in Zion
The deeds of the E<small>TERNAL</small> our God.

Polish the arrows,
Fill the quivers!
<small>OD</small>

 has roused the spirit of the kings of Media,
For the divine plan against Babylon is to destroy her.
This is G<small>OD</small>'s vengeance,
Vengeance for the holy^e<i class="footnote">the holy Lit. "His."</i> temple.

Raise a standard against the walls of Babylon!
Set up a blockade; station watchmen;
Prepare those in ambush.
For

GOD has both planned and performed
What was decreed against the inhabitants of Babylon.
O you who dwell by great waters,
With vast storehouses,
Your time is come, the hour of your end.
^f
the hour of your end Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

GOD
of Hosts has wholeheartedly sworn:
I will fill you with enemies
^g
enemies Lit. "people." like a locust swarm,
They will raise a shout against you.
[God] made the earth by might,
Established the world by wisdom,
And with understanding stretched out the skies.
When [God] bellows,
^h
When [God] bellows Lit. "At the sound of His making."
There is a rumbling of waters in the skies;
Vapors rise from the end of the earth,
Lightning accompanies the rain,
And wind is brought forth from God's treasuries.
Every mortal is proved dull, without knowledge;
Every goldsmith is put to shame because of the idol,
For their molten images are a deceit—
There is no breath in them.
They are delusion, a work of mockery;
In their hour of doom, they shall perish.
Not like these is the Portion of Jacob—
The One who formed all things,
With Israel as a permanent possession—
Whose name is GOD of Hosts.
You are My war club, [My] weapons of battle;
With you I clubbed nations,
With you I destroyed kingdoms;
With you I clubbed horse and rider,
With you I clubbed chariot and driver,
With you I clubbed man and woman,
With you I clubbed graybeard and boy,
With you I clubbed youth and maiden;
With you I clubbed shepherd and flock,
With you I clubbed plow and team,
With you I clubbed governors and prefects.
But I will requite Babylon and all the inhabitants of Chaldea
For all the wicked things they did to Zion before your eyes
—declares GOD.

See, I will deal with you, O mountain of the destroyer
—declares GOD</small>
Destroyer of the whole earth!
I will stretch out My hand against you
And roll you down from the crags,
And make you a burnt-out mountain.
They shall never take from you
A cornerstone or foundation stone;
You shall be a desolation for all time
—declares GOD</small>.

Raise a standard on earth,
Sound a horn among the nations,
Appoint nations against her,
Assemble kingdoms against her—
Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz—
Designate a marshal against her,
Bring up horses like swarmingⁱ<i class="footnote">swarming Meaning of Heb. uncertain.</i> locusts!
Appoint nations for war against her—
The kings of Media,
Her governors and all her prefects,
And all the lands they rule!
Then the earth quakes and writhes,
For GOD's purpose is fulfilled against Babylon,
To make the land of Babylon
A waste without inhabitant.
The warriors of Babylon stop fighting,
They sit in the strongholds,
Their might is dried up,
They become women.
Her dwellings are set afire,
Her bars are broken.
Runner dashes to meet runner,
Messenger to meet messenger,
To report to the king of Babylon
That his city is captured, from end to end.
The fords are captured,
And the swamp thickets^j<i class="footnote">thickets Meaning of Heb. uncertain.</i> are consumed in fire;
And the warriors are in panic.
For thus said GOD of Hosts, the God of Israel:
Fair Babylon is like a threshing floor
Ready to be trodden;
In a little while her harvesttime will come.
"Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon
Devoured me and discomfited me;
He swallowed me like a dragon,
He filled his belly with my dainties,
And set me down like an empty dish;
Then

he rinsed me out.

^k
rinsed me out Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

Let the violence done me and my kindred

Be upon Babylon,

Says the inhabitant of Zion;

“And let my blood be upon the inhabitants of Chaldea,”

Says Jerusalem.

Assuredly, thus said

OD:
I am going to uphold your cause

And take vengeance for you;

I will dry up her sea

And make her fountain run dry.

Babylon shall become rubble,

A den for jackals,

An object of horror and hissing,

^l
hissing See note at 18.16.

Without inhabitant.

Like lions, they roar together,

They growl like lion cubs.

When they are heated, I will set out their drink

And get them drunk, that they may become hilarious

^m
When they are heated, I will set out their drink / And get them drunk, that they may become hilarious Emendation yields “With poison [so Syriac] will I set out their drink / And get them drunk till they fall unconscious” (so ancient versions).

And then sleep an endless sleep,

Never to awake

—declares

OD.

I will bring them down like lambs for slaughter,

Like rams and he-goats.

How has Sheshach

ⁿ
Sheshach See note at 25.26.

been captured,

The praise of the whole earth been taken!

How has Babylon become

A horror to the nations!

The sea has risen over Babylon,

She is covered by its roaring waves.

Her towns are a desolation,

A land of desert and steppe,

A land nobody at all lives in

And no human passes through.

And I will deal with Bel in Babylon,

And make him disgorge what he has swallowed,

And nations shall no more gaze on him with joy.

Even the wall of Babylon shall fall.

Depart from there, O My people,

Save your lives, each of you,

From OD’s furious anger.

Do not be downhearted or
afraid
At the rumors heard in
the land:
A rumor will come one
year,
And another rumor the next
year
Of violence in the
land,
And of ruler against
ruler.

Assuredly, days are
coming,
When I will deal with
Babylon's images;
Her whole land
shall be shamed,
And all her
slain shall fall in her midst.

Heavens and earth and all that is in
them
Shall shout over
Babylon;
For the ravagers shall
come upon her from the north
<span class="poetry
indentAllDouble">—declares G<small>OD</small>.

Yes, Babylon is to fall
<span
class="poetry indentAll">[For] the slain of Israel,
<span
class="poetry indentAll">As the slain of all the earth
<span
class="poetry indentAll">Have fallen through Babylon.

You fugitives from the
sword,
Go, don't
delay!
Remember
G<small>OD</small> from afar,
And call
Jerusalem to mind.

"We were shamed, we heard
taunts;
Humiliation covered our
faces,
When aliens
entered
The sacred areas of
 G<small>OD</small>'s House."

Assuredly, days are coming
<span
class="poetry indentAllDouble">—declares G<small>OD</small>—

When I will deal with her
images,
And throughout her land
the dying shall groan.

Though Babylon should climb to the
skies,
Though she fortify her
strongholds up to heaven,
The
ravagers would come against her from Me
<span class="poetry
indentAllDouble">—declares G<small>OD</small>.

Hark! an outcry from
Babylon,
Great destruction from
the land of the Chaldeans.

For G<small>OD</small> is ravaging
Babylon;
He will put an end to her
great din,
Whose roar is like
waves of mighty waters,
Whose
tumultuous noise resounds.

For a ravager is coming upon
Babylon,
Her warriors shall be
captured, their bows shall be snapped.
<span class="poetry
indentAll">For the E<small>TERNAL</small> is a God of requital—

Who deals retribution.

I will make her officials and her sages
drunk,
Her governors and
prefects and warriors;
And they
shall sleep an endless sleep,
<span class="poetry
indentAll">Never to awaken
<span class="poetry
indentAllDouble">—declares the King<sup class="footnote-

marker">o</sup><i class="footnote">King See note at 46.18.</i>
 whose name is GOD of Hosts.
 Thus said GOD of
 Hosts:
Babylon's broad wall shall be
 knocked down,
And her high gates
 set afire.
Peoples shall labor
 for naught,
And nations have
 wearied themselves for fire.

 The instructions that the prophet Jeremiah gave to Seraiah son of Neriah
 son of Mahseiah, when the latter went with<sup class="footnote-
 marker">p</sup><i class="footnote">with Emendation yields "at the
 instance of."</i> King Zedekiah of Judah to Babylon, in the fourth year
 of [Zedekiah's] reign. Seraiah was quartermaster.<sup class="footnote-
 marker">q</sup><i class="footnote">quartermaster Meaning of Heb.
 uncertain.</i>
 Jeremiah wrote down in one scroll all the disaster that would come upon
 Babylon, all these things that are written concerning Babylon.
 And Jeremiah said to Seraiah, "When you get to Babylon, see that you read
 out all these words.
 And say, 'O ETERNAL One, You Yourself have declared
 concerning this place that it shall be cut off, without inhabitants—
 humans or animals; that it shall be a desolation for all time.'
 And when you finish reading this scroll, tie a stone to it and hurl it
 into the Euphrates.
 And say, 'Thus shall Babylon sink and never rise again, because of the
 disaster that I will bring upon it. And [nations] shall have wearied
 themselves [for fire].'"^r<i
 class="footnote">[for fire] Cf. v. 58, last line.</i> Thus far the
 words of Jeremiah.

Chapter 52

^a<i class="footnote">For this chapter
 cf. chap. 39 above and 2 Kings 24-25.</i> Zedekiah was twenty-one years
 old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem for eleven years.
 His mother's name was Hamutal, daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.
 He did what was displeasing to GOD, just as Jehoiakim had
 done.
 Indeed, Jerusalem and Judah were a cause of anger for GOD,
 so that^b<i class="footnote">were a
 cause of anger for GOD, so that Meaning of Heb.
 uncertain.</i> they were cast out of the divine presence.
Zedekiah
 rebelled against the king of Babylon.
 And in the ninth year of his^c<i
 class="footnote">his I.e., Zedekiah's.</i> reign, on the tenth day
 of the tenth month, King Nebuchadrezzar moved against Jerusalem with his
 whole army. They besieged it and built towers against it all around.
 The city continued in a state of siege until the eleventh year of King
 Zedekiah.
 By the ninth day of the fourth month, the famine had become acute in the
 city; there was no food left for the common people.
 Then [the wall of] the city was breached. All the soldiers fled; they
 left the city by night through the gate between the double walls, which
 is near the king's garden—the Chaldeans were all around the city—and they
 set out for the Arabah.^d<i
 class="footnote">set out for the Arabah See note at 39.4.</i>
 But the Chaldean troops pursued the king, and they overtook Zedekiah in
 the steppes of Jericho, as his entire force left him and scattered.
 They captured the king and brought him before the king of Babylon at
 Riblah, in the region of Hamath; and he put him on trial.

The king of Babylon had Zedekiah's sons slaughtered before his eyes; he also had all the officials of Judah slaughtered at Riblah.

Then the eyes of Zedekiah were put out, and he was chained in bronze fetters. The king of Babylon brought him to Babylon and put him in prison, [where he remained] to the day of his death.

On the tenth day of the fifth month—that was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon—Nebuzaradan, the chief of the guards, came to represent^e to represent *Lit. "he stood before."* the king of Babylon in Jerusalem.

He burned the House of G^{OD}, the king's palace, and all the houses of Jerusalem; he burned down the house of every notable person.^f *every notable person* Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

The entire Chaldean force that was with the chief of the guards tore down all the walls of Jerusalem on every side.

The remnant of the people left in the city, the defectors who had gone over to the king of Babylon, and what remained of the artisans^g *what remained of the artisans* Apparently after the deportation of 2 Kings 24.14; meaning of Heb. uncertain. were taken into exile by Nebuzaradan, the chief of the guards. But some of the poorest elements of the population—some of the poorest in the land—were left by Nebuzaradan, the chief of the guards, to be vine-dressers and field hands.

The Chaldeans broke up the bronze columns of the House of G^{OD}, the stands, and the bronze tank that was in the House of G^{OD}; and they carried all the bronze away to Babylon. They also took the pails, scrapers, snuffers, sprinkling bowls, ladles, and all the other bronze vessels used in the service.

The chief of the guards took whatever was of gold and whatever was of silver: basins, fire pans, sprinkling bowls, pails, lampstands, ladles, and jars.

The two columns, the one tank and the twelve bronze oxen that supported it, and the stands, which King Solomon had provided for the House of G^{OD}—all these objects contained bronze beyond weighing. As for the columns, each was eighteen cubits high and twelve cubits in circumference; it was hollow, and [the metal] was four fingers thick. It had a bronze capital above it; the height of each capital was five cubits, and there was a meshwork [decorated] with pomegranates about the capital, all made of bronze; and so for the second column, also with pomegranates.

There were ninety-six pomegranates facing outward;^h *facing outward* Meaning of Heb. uncertain. all the pomegranates around the meshwork amounted to one hundred.

The chief of the guards also took Seraiah the chief priest and Zephaniah, the deputy priest, and the three guardians of the threshold.

And from the city he took a eunuch who was in command of the soldiers; seven royal privy councillors, who were present in the city; the scribe of the army commander, who was in charge of mustering the people of the land; and sixty of the common people who were inside the city.

Nebuzaradan, the chief of the guards, took them and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah.

The king of Babylon had them struck down and put to death at Riblah, in the region of Hamath.
Thus Judah was exiled from its land.

This is the number of those whom Nebuchadnezzar exiled in the seventh year: 3,023 Judeans.

In the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar, 832 persons [were exiled] from Jerusalem.

And in the twenty-third year of Nebuchadrezzar, Nebuzaradan, the chief of the guards, exiled 745 Judeans. The total amounted to 4,600 persons. In the thirty-seventh year of the exile of King Jehoiachin of Judah, on the twenty-fifth day of the twelfth month, King Evil-merodach of Babylon, in the year he became king, took note of¹ King Jehoiachin of Judah and released him from prison. He spoke kindly to him, and gave him a throne above those of other kings who were with him in Babylon. He removed his prison garments and [Jehoiachin] ate regularly in his presence the rest of his life. A regular allotment of food was given him by order of the king of Babylon, an allotment for each day, to the day of his death—all the days of his life.